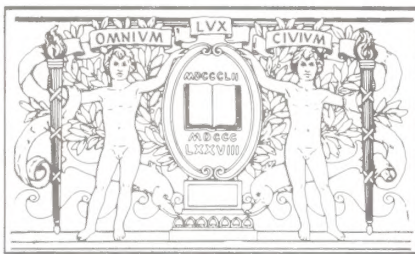






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# The Musical Mainstream

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# The Musical Mainstream

A Bimonthly Magazine Produced in  
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The *Musical Mainstream* contains several types of information. "Selected Reprints" is comprised of articles reprinted from national music and news periodicals. The "Features" section carries updated information about the National Library Service music program and original articles of interest to the blind and physically handicapped. Additions to the NLS music collection are listed under "New Music Materials."

Eligible blind and physically handicapped persons may order free subscriptions to the large-print, braille, or cassette versions of the *Musical Mainstream* from their cooperating libraries or from the Music Section, National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped, Library of Congress, Washington, DC 20542.

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# Announcements

## Live on Radio from the Met

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- a. 10 **The Dialogues of the Carmelites** (Poulenc)
- a. 17 **La Gioconda** (Ponchielli)
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- or. 4 **Parsifal** (Wagner)
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- or. 18 **La Traviata** (Verdi) with completely different cast from performance of Dec. 6, 1980.

consult newspaper for broadcast times and local radio stations. In some locations the broadcast will be transmitted in FM stereo. Transcripts (braille and large print) are available from the Music Section, National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped, Washington, D.C. 20542.

## Dictated Music Examples Available

Sample tapes and braille copies of additional dictated music examples are available for your evaluation. These selections demonstrate the handling of technical problems in different types of music ranging from fairly easy to difficult. Samples have been prepared for keyboard, vocal, and single-line instrumental music. We also urge you to send your comments on the five dictated music articles that have appeared in the *Musical Mainstream*. Our evaluation of this phase of the project will be greatly aided from your thoughts. Write to the Music Section, National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped, Washington, D.C. 20542.

## Lili Kraus: Regal Lady of the Keyboard

by Dean Elder

*Clavier*, September 1980

*Lili Kraus belongs to that breed of artists who make a concert an "event." Always gorgeously gowned, she is the actress-artist par excellence, exploring in words and in sound the gamut of music's heights and depths. Her long career includes early Parlophone recordings, wartime Japanese imprisonment, and recording the complete Mozart Sonatas and Concertos besides playing over 100 concerts a year. At seventy-two years of age she seems at the height of her powers, apt to outswim her hosts the day of a concert. And she is one of the warmest, most articulate, and compassionate human beings.*

\* \* \*

### How would you describe the evolution of your career?

You know the biography—the facts are so rich that I could write a book. I am ever

---

Dean Elder, pianist, writer, and teacher, studied on Fulbright Fellowships with Walter Frey, Jean Batalla, and Walter Gieseking in Europe. Besides diplomas from the Zurich Conservatory and the Ecole Normale in Paris, he has an MA from Columbia University Teachers College. Elder, who has interviewed many of the great pianists for *Clavier*, teaches in Dix Hills on Long Island. © 1980 by *Clavier*. All rights reserved. Used with permission.

and again asked to do so, but so far I haven't had the time. Perhaps when I cease to careen over the face of the earth, I will one day settle down and write my autobiography.

But the essential details about my career are these: ever since I can remember—which goes back to age three—music was in my blood, in every fiber of my body and in every recess of my soul and spirit. I really manifested my musicality first through dancing. My mother told me that whenever I heard music, in the street or the park, I danced.

There is a charming story by Gottfried Keller, the Swiss novelist and poet, called *Tanzlegende* which means the legend of the dance. In this story a little girl dances in front of the altar as her religious offering to Maria. She is caught, and the people accuse her of heresy. And then Maria comes down from the altar and folds the little girl in her cloak.

Like this little girl, I was compelled to dance whenever I heard music. Then, when I was six my mother decided I should learn to play the piano. I really wanted to play the violin, but I am sure she was instrumental in the plans of the Lord as we all are. So the piano it was.

I am infinitely grateful to her because the piano is the only instrument except the organ that doesn't need the support of another instrument to produce polyphony. And if I recall how often I have heard violinists or cellists accompanied miserably, I am thankful this was not my fate. For perhaps I would have ended on the gallop for having murdered those accompanists!



I am not of a violent disposition, by the way.

Then I was fortunate in having the most around training imaginable. When I was eight, I was admitted to the Royal Academy of Music in Budapest (the normal age of admittance is fourteen), and I studied with a perfect pupil of Busoni. Before I left the academy I studied with Bartók and theory with Kodaly.

I went to Vienna when I was eighteen and studied with a Leschetizky pupil who didn't become famous because he lost his memory through shell shock in the First World War and couldn't perform freely. But at twenty-three he was head of the master class at the Berlin Academy, so you can imagine what kind of a musician and pianist he was.

I studied contemporary music in Vienna with Edward Steuermann, the friend and disciple of Schönberg. And finally, when I was already a full-fledged artist and had played with many orchestras, I studied with Schnabel. Schnabel then remained a lifelong friend. Shortly before he died, he told me he considered me his only spiritual heir. So from my eighteenth year I never ceased to play, to perform, to record, and to teach. I had my first pupil, who was eight, when I was eight. And I had my next pupil, who was forty-five, when I was eleven. I got this pupil through the academy where the names, but not the faces, of the most talented students were on the blackboard. This lady was vastly astonished when she found at her doorstep a child, announcing in a tiny voice: "I am your new piano teacher." But we got along famously.

To this day I consider it both my privilege and my God-willed function to share all I was given and all I am able to impart—and that includes teaching as well. I would consider it a grave failing if I withheld the knowledge gathered in my life instead of having it carried forward by those I teach.

**What pieces did you study as a child, and what did you play on your first recital?**

The head of the Budapest Academy was Kálmán Chován, and we played his pieces predominantly. Then of course we played Jensen, Hummel, Bertini, the small Mozart pieces, and the Anna Magdalena Bach. On my first recital, when I was eight, I played two pieces from the Schumann "Album for the Young," that charming little Mozart minuet, and the little G Minor Minuet of Bach's from the Anna Magdalena book. My teacher took the pedal for me because my feet wouldn't reach.

**Do you remember how you practiced as a child?**

I remember very well. First of all I had on the one hand the good fortune, and on the other hand the ill fortune to have a mother who was exceedingly talented and musical but who had never studied music. In those days to be a singer was the next worst thing to being an old maid.

So, my mother, who understood music instinctively but had no idea about piano playing and had been thwarted in her own ambitions, centered all her ambitions on me. I could never really practice alone, carefree as I would have loved to do. I was always under surveillance but without expert advice.

Now this was a two-edged sword and a two-sided blessing: from the beginning my study was regular but somewhat hemmed-in. Later my mother's influence had one terrible disadvantage: when I was at the Academy I adored chamber music (Leo Weiner was head of the chamber music department), but my mother considered it a waste of time. And therefore I had to go unprepared to the chamber music classes when I would have loved to spend much more time on this literature.

Later on, however, when I was an artist I made up for lost time, for years having this duo with Szymon Goldberg. And the Kraus-Goldberg duo, as you know, was a household word.

### **How do you practice now?**

I never think of my work as practice. Practice somehow has the overtone of going over and over things, hoping to get the tempo. My work is not like that. I call what I am doing solid work, and it consists of many types of activities. First of all, before I approach a piece on the piano, I have lived with it for at least months and possibly years. The literature is big enough to allow for that. Secondly, there are certain parts in a composition which immediately, long before I materialize them, are clear and want to be played. And that's it. For instance, big sections of a theme are often so clear in my head that I can play them on the piano without any trouble, but I might have to work for hours on a short shake. You remember the Opus 96 Sonata in G Major for piano and violin by Beethoven: it starts first with that shake on the violin and the piano answers. When I recorded this work at the E.M.I. studios in London, I had

the run of the place; they allowed me to come at any time. I remember I went the one night with my husband at ten o'clock and left at one in the morning, and I worked on this shake and this shake only.

Now someone outside and uninitiated might think that I was demented, but I wasn't. This shake or trill had to speak in certain way, and boy did I ever learn to play short shakes ever since! No trouble. It works this way sometimes: one four-note section of a passage or 16 sixteenth notes might cause insurmountable difficulties. Why I don't know. The slightest difficult spot that "doesn't walk in the light before the Lord" casts its shadow on the piece. And such shadows had best be eliminated. I haven't worked on a scale, or octaves, or double thirds *per se* for thirty years.

### **In other words, you practice difficulties from the interpretative point of view**

Yes, always from that point of view. But of course for the interpretation to appear immaculate truthfulness, technical supremacy is indispensable. Therefore, my practicing includes technical work and hard drudging drills all the time, but never divorced from the text. In the really great works of music even a scale has something to say. And I assure myself the luxury of playing only the great works of music.

### **How do you memorize?**

Memorize—there again I don't know that word. By the time I can produce what I want to hear, by the time I am satisfied with the interpretation and it is technically correct, I have known it a long time by heart.

### **Do you have a photographic memory?**

I have an excellent visual memory, but



When I am playing I try to eliminate it because I want to remember with my ear, not my eye. I don't want to see the music but to hear it, to live it. I have to remember the sound and identify with the harmonic, melodic, rhythmic, and mechanical aspects completely that I don't want to see the picture.

**Does seeing the printed music hinder your hearing it?**

Not exactly, but it might hinder my being carried beyond the page into the realm where I want to live when I perform.

**What advice can you give for memorizing?**

I think that every musician when asked this question can have only one answer: the student or the artist must know the piece from every aspect—harmonically, melodically, and rhythmically. The harmonic life is the “key” in a classical composition. And then the student must analyze the piece formally and master it technically so that the situation doesn't enter. But first and last, a reliable memory is possible only if an absolute identification with the piece in living experience has taken place.

However, even these “moorings” do not guarantee absolute security because such a thing doesn't exist. Even a man like Schnabel who could perform all the Beethoven sonatas once simply broke off in the middle of the *Hammerklavier* and said, “Allow me to play another sonata. I can't play this one today.” And it was a proverb that at no concert of Cortot's ever took place without his getting stuck. To my best recollection Gieseeking never had memory lapses, but he had a very special kind of memory.

So, my final point about memorizing is that almost no memorizing is 100 percent secure. Memory depends on the person, the performance, and the state of the person's nerves.

**What is your approach to interpretation?**

This is a crucial question. At my age this is the sum total of my life's experience: that what you call a great interpretation must go far beyond not only the instrument but the music itself, and great music tries to manifest nothing less than the cosmos. The cosmos includes all that exists: the music of the spheres in all its appearances whether water, wind, bird, noise, storm, lightning, thunder, or the sweetest rustling of the leaf. Great composers like Bach, Mozart, Haydn, and Beethoven, of course, had such fine perception and heard these things within themselves so clearly they could give them immortal form.

In interpreting a piece you have to feel the entire cosmos; through endless research you have to penetrate to the core of the matter and then wed the spirit you find therein with your own into one indivisible whole. Otherwise, you do what Beethoven in one of his letters despised: “The interpreter must be absolutely faithful to the written text; he must neither omit nor add even an iota of what he sees. But if he does nothing else but this, he renders very poor service to music indeed.” Now this quote answers exactly what I call “big” interpretation which is my aim and for which I live.

**You once mentioned a particular performance as an example of Beethoven's quote.**

Yes, this particular performance related everything about the music except its essence. It was correct, beautifully rendered, and quite musical, but it was never sad, gay, impetuous, or playful. There was no sin committed against phrasing or against understanding of musical matters. But music goes far beyond that, and no more was forthcoming.

**One of the wonderful things about music is that many approaches to interpretation are possible. Some critics, unfortunately, push just for one kind of playing.**

Today's critics get their information mostly from gramophone records and from the contemporary output which is, except for a few exceptions, cut off from the great tradition.

Great music blossomed from a completely different source of information and inspiration than today's music. Those were not technological days. When Beethoven composed his "Pastorale," he could walk for twenty minutes out of Vienna and be in utter stillness, stillness filled with the music which existed in nature and in him.

When the great composers demanded "molto espressivo, molto cantabile, or andante amoroso," they meant that these should be the emotions of the players. If Mozart writes "amoroso," as he does for the second movement of his Sonata, K. 281, he wants to hear the music filled with love.

It was Goethe, I think, who said "the hallmark of genius is love." If you don't have that love in you, how can you express

it? If you have it, but are afraid to express it, how can the listener receive this message? So I think that when an audience is thrilled for technical reasons, this thrill is on the surface. When listeners are moved because they have received the performer's emotional message, this is both elating and lasting.

**Speaking of recordings, two of the first I ever bought were your Parlophone recordings of the Beethoven *Eroica Variations* and the Mozart B-flat Concerto, K. 456.**

Oh you remember them! You know in those days there were only two papers in London that wrote about gramophone records in a serious way: the *Gramophone* and *The Statesman and Nation*. Edward Sackville-West of *The New Statesman* said, "Although the Schnabel recording of the *Eroica Variations* is really superb, I prefer the Kraus." Reading this made me shiver, very happy.

**You have said it takes a lifetime to simplify, to find the essence of what is happening in classical music.**

What I mean by "simplifying" is that the more concise the music, the more economic the means must be to bring the message across. If you really understand the message, you don't have to gild the lily. No dynamics or agogic effects other than what you would use to bring to life a Shakespearean text need be employed for clearest articulation and deepest emotional projection.

Take a piece like Mozart's *A Minor Rondo* which is his only composition with dynamic indications in almost every bar. With the utmost precision, Mozart writes

sixteenth note where a crescendo will not. This kind of detailed dynamic notation doesn't exist in any other Mozart piece. So Mozart was particularly bent on giving expression to what he thought and wanted to be expressed. But if you take these dynamic markings at their face value and play actual *forte*, actual *crescendo*, actual *piano*, you break the piece into a thousand little bits. It took me almost a year of time to understand that all these markings are grades of expression and are only infinitesimal diminishments or infinitesimal augmentations to bring home the sense of what is happening.

Now this is simplification because you bring it down to a minimum instead of bringing it up to a maximum. Not every piece is like this. Beethoven asks for a maximum *espressivo* when he writes *fortissimo*; but there again instead of bodily volume *per se*, you must reach a climax in keeping with the sense of the text. Open the score. Let the music either soar or thunder, but not with a conscious effort to play a *fortissimo* for its own sake. In other words, dynamics must be a result of your desire to bring the work to life and never a means to prettify, to diversify, or to make amusing and interesting.

**Among today's great artist, you are perhaps the only one who prefaces the actual playing with commentaries. What is your feeling about expressing the meaning of a work in words?**

Expressing the meaning of music in words is an easy task if you know the literature, for almost all composers at one time or another have put words to their musical symbols: Mozart in his operas,

Schubert in his songs, Beethoven in his Mass, Bach in his cantatas. There is practically no composer who hasn't written abstract music, for example, Mendelssohn in his "Songs Without Words," that could not easily be paralleled in already-existing texts.

Now why is expressing the meaning in words so helpful? Because if someone has a completely wrong feeling for a passage, words will help. For example, in Brazil a very talented student of mine asked, "Oh, will you play that lovely, gay Mozart Sonata in A Minor?"

"The gay one? Which one do you mean?"

And then she sang like a bird, without a care in the world, the first theme of the A Minor Sonata, K. 310.

"You call that gay?" I asked. "Yes, it's very gay, isn't it, like a march?" she said.

Now even if one didn't know Mozart composed this sonata right after the death of his mother, and disregarding the revealing fact that it's the only sonata that bears the indication "*Allegro maestoso*" and one of the two minor-key sonatas in all the seventeen, one should still feel that this is an epitaph, a tragic piece. But okay, let's assume you don't. Then words can be of great help to describe what it all means. Schnabel used to improvise texts for almost all the music he taught, and his texts were extremely helpful.

**Is smaller-unit phrasing more important for the classics and big-line phrasing for the romantics?**

What is more important—to speak a whole sentence or to articulate syllables? The big line, of course, is absolutely indis-



pensable. You articulate details to bring the whole sentence to life. The only reason for articulating in small units is to enable the big line to emerge. The big line is just as important to the classics as to the romantics; and for this big line to emerge and come to life, attention to detail is indispensable.

**You seemed to conceive the Waldstein Sonata dramatically, more in the style of the Appassionata than in terms of something burgeoning, something having to do with nature and the sunrise.**

Beethoven never called it the "Spring Sonata." This is a nickname given afterwards. I don't go along with this burgeoning, but I do imagine it as the first day of creation with the pulsating heart in the beats at the beginning where nothing has crystallized yet. This sonata is dramatic; and although spring is at times dramatic, I don't associate this sonata with spring.

**You don't see the sun rising at the beginning of the last movement?**

Yes, but that's not spring; it could be any beautiful sunrise. No, I don't feel it that way.

**It bothers me that certain critics deplore what they call "the Dresden doll" approach to Mozart, saying Mozart should be played big, with lots of pedal.**

Such an approach is of course utterly false. But it is important not to mix up two things: Mozart should be big in emotional content. It shouldn't have little or much pedal; it should have the right amount of pedal. As you know, the Mozart piano had two unconnected pedals. The left hand, therefore, could produce uninterrupted harmonies without interfering with the

melodic line. But since we can't do this, play the left hand, say an Alberti bass, with absolute legato by holding down the fingers. The left hand sounds swimming in pedal, but there is not a drop of pedal. The right hand is then free to move as it wants. In Mozart there should never be one moment that obscures a running passage or robs us of the harmonic continuity.

Mozart must have all the greatness of Beethoven, but with diminished means. The whole difficulty in Mozart is that you have to pretend a loud *forte*, and this pretence must come from an intensity, a relative strength, vitality, and dramatic power rather than actual body volume.

**You mentioned in one of your concerts that the first theme of the second movement of Beethoven's Pathétique Sonata has an identical melodic line as the theme in the middle section of the second movement of Mozart's Sonata in C Minor. Did Beethoven emulate Mozart?**

Both excerpts have the same climate, the same thought, and key relationship, and I would give anything to know whether Beethoven took the Mozart theme as a model or whether the two themes are a coincidental similar thought. Nobody will ever know for sure. But certainly the Beethoven is an absolute replica à la Beethoven of the Mozart theme.

**Schubert is sometimes called the most other-worldly of the great composers. Do you agree? Would you comment about playing Schubert?**

Schubert, for several reasons, is terribly hard to play. He is the most unpianistic piano composer I know. It must be that he wasn't a piano virtuoso, like Mozart or

ethoven, and didn't care so much for no sound. I would say he wrote against rather than for the piano, but when you master his writing, it sounds more pianistic than almost any other piano music, except perhaps that of Chopin.

The other-worldliness is perfectly true. It is a very good description of Schubert—so other-worldly because genius in its most childlike form is other-worldly. Schubert's genius is not tinged by experience, artfulness, or acquired knowledge; it is a first-time emanation, not yet schooled. The handful of friends that Schubert had all agreed that he had a most childlike, innocent nature. He was utterly incapable of lying, malice, or simulation. Indeed the miracle of his music is that, like his life, everything was a first-time happening, with the same freshness and new marvel of the world experiencing for the first time.

When I think of Schubert, my heart is so humming over with love and compassion that sometimes I can hardly bear it. But knowing and understanding him is not enough. He really does present enormous problems. In his music the harmonic life of every piece is more moved, rich, and irrational than in any other composer's music I know. To be constantly aware of all this and yet not betray that you are is one of the difficulties in playing Schubert. The other difficulty is to avoid sentimentality, because Schubert was never sentimental, and to be as passionate as was his heart, but without showing it.

**I enjoyed your Chopin. It was good to hear Chopin played with fire, without the contours filed down. Do you play much Chopin?**

I used to. Between my eighteenth and twenty-third years I was known as a Chopin player. At that time my hair was very long, and I wore huge hairpins to pin it up. By the end of a Chopin program, the hair was down and the hairpins all around me—very romantic. I am sure people thought, "if that isn't the real Chopin, what is!"

I love to play Chopin and would play much more if it weren't for the fact that life is too short and I am asked to play other kinds of music as well. But I would like to make clear that Chopin is not so near my heart as these other composers simply for the fact that I need that cast of mind which includes the symphonic, polyphonic imagination of these other composers. Chopin was a piano composer par excellence, and somehow I am always hesitant to offer even the Chopin Concerti to an orchestra because the orchestra has so little to do.

**What are some of the qualities of the great pianists?**

Their qualities are as manifold as there are pianists. They should have application, passion, understanding, very likely technique. But the common denominator is indeed their involvement and identification with the music and the extent to which they can project this identification.

**Should a great pianist have great passion for playing the piano?**

No, for music. There is a great, great difference. From what I gather a man like Lhevinne—whom I didn't have the pleasure of knowing or hearing—had a great

passion for playing the piano, but not for music. Horowitz is more triggered, luckily in a very demonic way, more by his desire to play the piano than by music, whereas with Schnabel it was just the other way around. Schnabel's first and last concern was the music which he eventually put into words through the medium of the piano. Backhaus was similar.

### **What are your ideals of tone?**

That's a good question. There are singers, for instance, who have a golden tone, a gorgeous sound. But if this tone factor is the focus of their interest and not what the music wants to say, after awhile their singing becomes boring. A pianist, of course, yearns to produce the most beautiful, singing, unpercussive sound possible, and that is one's greatest challenge. On the piano, as you know, the individual note dies at its birth, but in great music, all kinds of sound must be found and produced. Harsh, percussive, impatient, pleading, anxious sound—all of this—must go into what you

are saying because this is what the music says.

To be able to produce this great variety of tone you must have much more at your command than just the general use of color. You must have a million shades as needed to give the composition its due. I always use weight. Only the speed with which I make the contact on the key varies, and this safeguards the beauty and roundness of the tone because I never hit the key. Such increases or decreases in tone are produced always with the maintenance of weight, firmness of finger, but with varying speed of contact.

**I assume that conveying the content of the music is more important to you than imbuing everything with a certain kind of pianistic tone.**

You are perceptive to recognize this. Striving for a certain kind of tone is not paramount with me. My absolutely first consideration is to express what the music says.



## Muzio Clementi: Rediscovered Genius

Joan Pursewell  
*The American Music Teacher*,  
 September/October 1980

Muzio Clementi is one of the least known, while at the same time one of the most influential, musicians of the Classical period. Virtually every piano student has played his famous 36 Sonatinas with varying skill and musicality, but all too few pianists have moved beyond the superficial Clementi to discover why he deserves such accolades as the man most clearly entitled to stand alongside Haydn and Mozart among Beethoven's immediate predecessors,<sup>1</sup> and why he was proclaimed as the foremost keyboard genius of his day. The life and works of this man of many skills—composer, pianist, director, transcriber, teacher, writer, publisher, manufacturer,<sup>2</sup>—are fascinating to study and is a representation not only of one man's works, but of the English way of life at the beginning of the nineteenth century.

<sup>1</sup> William S. Newman, *The Sonata in the Classic Era*, second edition, W.W. Norton and Co., Inc., 1972, p. 738.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid, p. 739.

Dr. Pursewell has degrees from California State and the Universities of Wisconsin and Iowa. She has taught at Loyola, Idaho, and Washington University, and is presently teaching and performing in Seattle. 1980 by *The American Music Teacher*. All rights reserved. Used with permission.

Clementi (1752–1832) was born in Rome, son of a poor silversmith, and was “discovered” by a well-to-do Englishman, Peter Beckford, scion of a fabulously wealthy family of Jamaican planters, while on a tour of Italy. Mr. Beckford induced the father to accept a large sum of money and allow him to take young Muzio to England. As Beckford stated, he “bought [him] of his father for seven years.”<sup>3</sup>

In 1766 or 1767 Clementi arrived at Mr. Beckford's estate in Dorsetshire; he was already an accomplished player and composer, having written a mass for two choirs by the age of twelve, and already permanent organist at the Church of San Lorenzo in Damaso, so it is hard to imagine who could have taught him anything. With plenty of leisure and solitude to develop his talent, he put in a prodigious number of hours at the keyboard, and at age twenty-one emerged on the London musical scene with a set of sonatas, Opus 2 “for harpsichord or pianoforte,”<sup>4</sup> but really written for the piano.

His reputation as a performer and composer grew and he was celebrated as the finest keyboardist in England. His technique was phenomenal—especially his legato passages and his smooth, rapid thirds and sixths. Soon he acquired a fine reputation as a teacher and was able to charge a guinea a lesson, payable twenty lessons in advance.

<sup>3</sup> Quoted in Leon Plantinga, *Clementi: His Life and Times*, Oxford University Press, 1977, p. 3.

<sup>4</sup> Plantinga, *op. cit.*, p. 40.

From 1780 to 1784 he made a grand tour of Europe, giving concerts in Paris, Vienna, and Lyon (including the famous contest with Mozart in Vienna).<sup>5</sup> Returning to England, he was active as a sonata and symphony composer, performer, and conductor in London.

By 1792 he became restless. In terms of the English society of the day he was “merely” a musician, although well-read, fluent in several languages, and scientifically inclined. He had been rejected by the daughter of a banker in Lyon because he was an artist. Accordingly, although he continued to compose, he stopped performing and began investing money in the firm of Longman and Broderip, his publishers. The company went bankrupt in 1798, but was bought out by Clementi and renamed Longman, Clementi, and Co., eventually becoming Clementi and Co. The partners decided to concentrate on piano manufacture and sales—a sure seller with Clementi as the leading partner. Clementi was quite knowledgeable about piano construction, and under his supervision the Clementi pianos soon gained a reputation for quality. Clementi also became extremely wealthy. His fortune by the turn of the century has been estimated at 15,000 pounds at the least.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>5</sup> Described in Newman, *op. cit.*, pp. 746–748.

<sup>6</sup> Arthur Loesser, *Men, Women and Pianos*, Simon and Schuster, 1954, p. 261. See Loesser also for an illuminating view of London musical life at the turn of the nineteenth century.

A young student of his, John Field, was hired to act as salesman and to demonstrate in the showroom. Field’s youth and good looks, as well as his expressive piano playing, helped to sell a good number of pianos for the firm.

In 1802 Clementi and Field set out for the continent; the trip was a successful selling and publicity venture for the Clementi pianos. Traveling to Russia, Germany, Austria, and Italy, Clementi did not return to England until 1810. In Vienna he scored a coup by securing the publishing rights to many of Beethoven’s works. In Berlin, he married Caroline Lehmann, the eighteen-year-old daughter of the music director of the Nicolaikirche in that city. The successful Clementi was highly approved of by Caroline’s father, despite the great difference in age between himself, now fifty-one, and young Caroline. The marriage was not to last, however. After only a year Caroline gave birth to a son, Carl, in August 1805, and died nine days later. Clementi was distraught over her death, and after a period of mourning resumed his travels, leaving his son in the care of his mother-in-law in Berlin.

In 1807, while he was still in Europe, the company burned down and workshops, instruments, and storerooms worth 40,000 pounds were lost. The loss was covered by insurance, larger facilities were built, and the company reached new heights of prosperity. Clementi pianos were among the first pianos to be exported to America, and became the most popular make in the colonies. There are still some Clementi pianos in the United States—at the New England

nservatory, Barnard College, and in New  
dford, Mass.

In 1810 Clementi retired to the country,  
ally a "gentleman" by British standards,  
married, and turned again to composition.  
ter his death in 1832, his firm, under the  
ne of Collard and Collard, became sec-  
d only to Broadwood in sales and reputa-  
n.

Clementi was the first of several com-  
sers in England to turn commercial and  
e up the "artist's" life in order to be  
epted by English society. Others were  
issek, Cramer, Pleyel, and Herz, and the  
mbination of musician and businessman  
came more and more common in Europe  
the nineteenth century.

### Clementi's Music

The bulk of Clementi's composition lies in  
the form of sonatas, both for solo and ac-  
panied keyboard. Unfortunately most  
the larger works, the symphonies and  
ncerti written during the early London  
ars (1786–1800), are lost. Two of the  
ly symphonies survive (Opus 18), but by  
the turn of the century Clementi evidently  
t his work was being eclipsed by Joseph  
ydn, and his commercial interests were  
coming more important. As a result the  
in body of works left to us, and the most  
lueential, are the compositions for piano.  
William Newman, a pioneer in the  
ampionship of Clementi's works, ranks  
ementi along with Frescobaldi and Scar-  
ti as one of the three greatest Italian in-  
vators of the keyboard—he is "the com-  
ser who first revealed the potentialities of  
e piano."<sup>7</sup>

<sup>7</sup>Newman, *op. cit.*, p. 754.

Theodore de Wyzewa, in the Senart edi-  
tion of the Clementi sonatas (published  
around 1900), says Clementi "invented and  
elaborated at one stroke and in its final  
shape the new piano style destined hence-  
forth to replace everywhere the old  
harpsichord style which still survived in the  
writing of even the most celebrated pianist  
composers of that time."<sup>8</sup>

Beethoven, who was attracted to  
Clementi's works, ". . . had the greatest  
admiration for these sonatas, considering  
them the most beautiful, the most pianistic  
of works, both for their lovely, pleasing,  
original melodies, and for the consistent,  
easily followed form of each movement."<sup>9</sup>

Until recently, no two authorities agreed  
on the correct number of sonatas and other  
works—Newman, Tyson, and Plantinga  
being now the reliable sources. A guide to  
the seventy-nine sonatas is found in New-  
man,<sup>10</sup> and Tyson's *Index* is a valuable  
listing of all the works.<sup>11</sup>

### The Sonatas

Clementi's sonatas undergo a gradual tran-  
sition from a brilliant virtuosic style to a  
use of more chromatic harmonies and a  
lyric expression. The early sonatas are bril-  
liant in conception.

<sup>8</sup>Quoted in Alfred Mirovitch, Ed.,  
*Clementi: Rediscovered Masterworks*,  
Vols. I–III, Edward B. Marks Music Corp.,  
1959, Vol. I, p. 5.

<sup>9</sup>Plantinga, *op. cit.*, p. 310.

<sup>10</sup>Newman, *op. cit.*, pp. 742–745.

<sup>11</sup>Alan Tyson, *Thematic Catalog of the  
Works of Muzio Clementi*, Hans Schneider,  
1967.



Plantinga notes resemblances to Scarlatti in the early works, and cites *The Black Joke* (1777), a set of fiendishly difficult variations utilizing the full resources and skill of the pianist.<sup>12</sup>

It was one of the early sonatas, Opus 41/2,<sup>13</sup> and its companion toccata, Opus 11/2, which Clementi played at the famous contest with Mozart, and which earned Mozart's scorn for its overt brilliance. The letter which Mozart wrote to his sister describing Clementi's talents in less than glowing terms damaged Clementi's reputation at the time. He did acknowledge later that he had been preoccupied with brilliance and technical skill at this stage, and it was only later that he turned to a more lyric style. After the directness of Opus 2 and Opus 12, Clementi turned to more chromaticism and irregular rhythms in the later sonatas.

But Clementi always stayed within the realm of the Classical sonata. In fact, by the time he wrote his last sonatas (1821), although he was respected for his contributions to the English musical scene, he was old-fashioned in comparison to what Beethoven was writing at the time.

William Newman gives us an excellent, concise overview of the sonatas and their characteristics. Plantinga discusses each sonata more in detail, and his descriptions are extremely valuable in that he uses numerous examples for illustrations: a great

help since so many of the sonatas are unavailable.

The outstanding characteristics and the most influential is Clementi's broad and spacious use of piano "sound," utilizing octaves, thirds, and sixths—a completely new and "pianistic" writing as opposed to the scalar and finger passage-work of the other Classical composers. Even more important is the manner of playing. Clementi reversed the nonlegato style of the preceding generation, so favored by Mozart, in favor of a purely legato style of playing. This conception of piano sound leads directly into Beethoven's insistence on legato and his use of long pedaling on the instrument of that time.

The first movements of the sonatas are usually in sonata-form, often with extended slow introductions (perhaps influenced by Haydn's symphonies) and extended developments, both of these formal considerations obviously influencing Beethoven. The slow movements are relatively short—"florid, introspective *adagios*,"<sup>11</sup> and are deeply expressive. The third movement is usually a rondo; sometimes a dance, such as a polonaise or minuet, may be used or a theme and variations. The third movement of Opus 12/1 is a set of variations on the English air "Since Then I'm Doomed This Sad Reverse of Fate to Prove."

## Other Piano Works

Clementi wrote a number of miscellaneous solo pieces. The *Waltzes* (Opus 38,39) are accompanied by triangle and tambourine and

<sup>12</sup> Plantinga, *op. cit.*, pp. 41–42.

<sup>13</sup> Although given the Opus number of 41, this sonata was actually written before 1781, and published in 1804.

<sup>11</sup> Newman, *op. cit.*, p. 751.

ightful, although obviously concessions to the popular taste of the day. Others are more ambitious, namely *The Black Joke*, already cited, and two later works: *Fantasia and Variations on Au Clair de la Lune* (Opus 48), and *Two Capriccios* (Opus 47), all written in 1821.

Other miscellaneous pieces include a *Rondo* (1802); an unusual set of pieces entitled *Musical Characteristics* (Opus 36), a collection of "preludes and canons" composed in the style of Haydn, Czerny, Mozart, Sterkel, Vanhal, and the author (1787); *La Chasse*, a one-movement sonata (Opus 16); *Capriccio* (Opus 17); *Fantasia on Batti, Batti* (Opus 320); and the ingratiating and tuneful *Twelve Monferrine* (Opus 49).

Editions of these pieces are hard to find. Alfred Mirovitch has included two waltzes, seven *Monferrine*, *La Chasse*, and several sonatas in "Rediscovered Masterworks"; the *Waltzes* appear in the print of the complete works; the others exist in manuscript in various libraries, and if edited and published would become additions to the repertoire.

### The Didactic Works

Clementi was of a scholarly bent, widely read, conversant in eight languages; it is not surprising that he contributed several educational works.

*Practical Harmony*, a four-volume anthology of compositions ranging from the seventeenth century to contemporary composers, was published in the years 1801, 1811, 1812, 1814. Much of the material was edited from Clementi's own collection of manuscripts acquired during

his travels; the second volume is notable for the inclusion of music by the Bach family, much of it published for the first time.

In 1801 the first edition of the *Introduction to the Art of Playing on the Pianoforte* was published (Opus 42), eventually printed in eleven editions, and later translated into French, German, Italian, and Spanish. The *Introduction*, intended for the beginning student, explains notation, theory, hand position, use of legato, and provides exercises for scales, arpeggios, and, knowing Clementi's reputation, passages in thirds and sixths.

Some innovative technical points are introduced: the thumb should not be used on the black notes, finger changing on the same note is not always necessary, unnecessary motion should be avoided (Clementi was one of the first teachers to place a coin on the back of the hand to produce a level wrist). Of interest is the point that Clementi was probably the first to advocate starting a trill on the main note.

The *Introduction* also includes 50 "Lessons" consisting of short pieces in various styles, arranged by groups of keys, each group prefaced by a prelude written in that key by Clementi. Clementi reissued his earlier Opus 36 Sonatinas as a supplement to the *Introduction*, which title page suggests buying these, conveniently published by Clementi's company. Even without the sonatinas, the *Introduction* is a fine anthology of easy keyboard music, and was favored by

Beethoven, who tried to secure copies for himself and his friends.<sup>15</sup>

Clementi finished the *Gradus ad Parnassum*, a collection of one hundred compositions in two volumes, in 1821. This work is Clementi's "Manifesto"; it contains material he had been collecting and revising for forty-five years, including compositions of all types—fugues, canons, sonata movements, etudes, a *scena patetica*. The pieces are more than just exercises; they are a compendium of musical styles and compositional types. The *Gradus* developed a reputation as a dry pedagogical treatise (and a name forever known to students through Debussy's parody, *Dr. Gradus ad Parnassum*) because of Tausig's edition (1865) of 29 of the duller and most mechanical of the etudes. The *Gradus* is now published by Kalmus and Peters, allowing present-day pianists to have a complete view of its treasures.

Clementi is being "rediscovered," thanks to the efforts of performers such as Vladimir Horowitz and scholars such as William Newman, Alan Tyson, and Leon Plantinga. There is not as yet a really "complete" edition. Breitkopf and Härtel (reprinted by Da Capo Press), Kalmus, Peters, Schirmer, Marks (edited by Mirovitch), Alfred (an excellent edition of the Opus 26 Sonatinas by Willard Palmer which corrects the multitude of editorial mistakes learned by generations of piano students) are the most accessible

of the publishers, although offering only a selection of the complete music.

An up-to-date complete edition would be welcomed and would give new generations of students and artists a chance to become acquainted with this "rediscovered genius."

**Editor's note:** A list of Clementi's music in braille available from the NLS Music Section follows. Notes and the bibliography for the *American Music Teacher* article will be found following the list.

## Clementi's piano music in braille—NLS Music Section

**Gradus ad Parnassum**      **BRM 21310**  
Breitkopf und Hartel; Mugellini, ed.

**Preludes and Exercises: Studies for Major and Minor Keys**      **BRM 2125**  
Ricordi; Mugellini, ed.

**Sonata op. 12 no. 4, E flat major**      **BRM 22320**  
Augener; Taylor, ed.

**Sonata op. 14 no. 3, F minor**      **BRM 6410**  
Schott

**Sonatas (Selections)**      **BRM 21256**  
Ricordi

- op. 2 no. 1, C major
- op. 12 no. 4, E flat major
- op. 25 no. 2, G major
- op. 26 no. 1, A major
- op. 26 no. 2, F sharp minor

<sup>15</sup>The *Introduction* is now published in a facsimile edition by Da Capo Press, 1973.



op. 26 no. 3, D major  
 op. 34 no. 1, C major  
 op. 36 no. 1, A major  
 op. 39 no. 2, G major  
 op. 40 no. 2, B minor  
 op. 40 no. 3, D minor  
 op. 47 no. 2, B flat major

**Sonata op. 47, no. 2, B flat**  
**major BRM 2818**  
 Augener

**Sonatinas op. 36**  
 Sonatines Progressives op. 36

**Sonatinas op. 37** (Piano parts of Sonatas  
 Violin and Piano op. 4 nos.  
 3) **BRM 21326**  
 Augener

**Sonatinas op. 38** (Piano parts of Sonatas  
 Violin and Piano op. 4 nos.  
 5) **BRM 21327**  
 Augener

**Sonatine Progressive op. 36 no. 2, G**  
**major BRM 10304, 10534**  
 Schirmer

**Sonatine Progressive op. 36 no. 3, C**  
**major BRM 144-143**  
 Schirmer

**Sonatine Progressive op. 36 no. 3, C**  
**major BRM 11085**  
 Schirmer

**Sonatine Progressive op. 36 no. 4, F**  
**major BRM 144-144**  
 Schirmer

**Sonatine Progressive op. 36 no. 4, F**  
**major BRM 3205**  
 G. Schirmer

**Sonatine Progressive op. 36 no. 5, G**  
**major BRM 144-145, 7011**  
 G. Schirmer

**Sonatine Progressive op. 36 no. 6, D**  
**major BRM 144-146, 6997**  
 G. Schirmer

**Sonatinas Progressives op. 36 nos.**  
**1-6 BRM 2247**  
 Augener

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## James Levine Wrecking the Met?

Irving Kolodin  
*Saturday Review*, June 1980

Since 1975 when James Levine, the Metropolitan Opera's principal conductor, was tapped for the music director's job, he has become one of the best-known musicians on the American scene. This is much to be proud of in the space of five years.

Being well-known, however, does not necessarily mean doing well. While Levine as music director and de facto artistic director has brought about some welcome variety in the Met's repertory, he has failed to forge the company into a cohesive ensemble, has neglected, alienated, or misused some of today's ablest singers, and has allowed his ambitions as a conductor to cloud his judgment. Consequently, the Met today has too few top resident artists, a handful of exceptional secondary singers, and an overabundance of guest performers. One of the glories of the world musical scene, the Met may be on the verge of becoming a second-rate opera house.

To understand the problem one must first understand the history of the management of the Met. From the early years of the century to the recent past, artistic decisions at the Met were made by artistic directors, who held the title of general manager (the most prominent among these were Giulio Gatti-Casazza, 1908–1935, and Rudolf Bing, 1950–1972). Bing's successor, Herbert Beran, came from the Stockholm Opera, was killed in an automobile accident before his first season began. Until Levine, the

Met has never had a music director per se: each artistic director had a musical advisor to assist him. The last man to hold the title of general manager was Schuyler G.

Chapin, whose contract was not renewed when it expired in July 1975. Anthony A. Bliss, the executive director and longtime member of the Met's board, in effect replaced Chapin as head of the opera. Bliss, however, did not consider himself qualified to make artistic evaluations.

In fact, William Rockefeller, then president of the Met's board and now its chairman, explained the board's decision to abolish the position of general manager by saying, "We must never have an impresario again. We've outgrown the need." What Rockefeller failed to understand is that no operatic institution can produce its best work without a strong guiding hand. His failure in understanding left a void in the Met hierarchy—and Levine was right there, ready to fill it.

How did Levine do it? How did he become *the* artistic power at the Met? As Chapin recounts in his autobiography *Musical Chairs* (1977), shortly before Chapin's departure he offered Levine a contract that would have given Levine and stage director John Dexter expanded artistic authority, but the final responsibility would continue to reside with the general manager. For months, Levine's agent, Ron Wilford, held on to the contract. When Chapin demanded that the Met's lawyers press Wilford, the general manager was informed that the negotiations were now in Bliss's hands.

The dénouement was not long in coming. Bliss accepted all of Levine's demands for



greater authority. Shortly thereafter, the board of directors let Chapin go and endorsed Bliss as the successor. In opera, decisions have to be made not only every day but every hour, so there was only one man in a position to make them—Levine. This is especially true because Dexter has not been the counterbalance to Levine's influence that was originally intended. Dexter has his own flourishing career as a Broadway-play director to look after, and his good work at the Met has been limited to such productions as Francis Poulenc's *Dialogues of the Carmelites*, which is more theater than opera.

Was Levine, then thirty-two, qualified to become de facto artistic director of the Met? Did he have the breadth of experience, background, or vision that has characterized the great operatic artistic directors of our age—men like Rolf Liebermann or Rudolf Bing, both of whom had years of experience before acceding to their posts at the Paris Opera and the Met, respectively?

Compare their backgrounds. Trained as a composer, Liebermann began work in opera in his native Zurich. As early as 1951, he had the foresight to request the rights to Alban Berg's complete opera *Lulu* when they should become available. (His sentiments explain how the Paris Opera became the first company to stage it in 1979.) In 1959, Liebermann began his remarkably resourceful direction of the Hamburg Opera, where he remained until he went to Paris in 1973.

Sir Rudolf Bing, the other man of international distinction in this scarcely over-

populated company, was not trained to be a professional musician, although he did study singing. But opera has been a part of his professional life since 1928 when, at age 26, he went to work at the Darmstadt (Germany) Theater. Two years later he moved to the Charlottenburg Opera in Berlin. Leaving Germany at the beginning of the Hitler regime, Bing soon became affiliated with the not-yet-famous Glyndebourne Opera, near London. In the postwar years he created the Edinburgh Festival, whose fine productions and high standards are by now renowned. By the time Bing arrived at the Met in 1949, he had already had a distinguished career as an artistic director.

Measured against such men, Levine has neither the experience, nor the judgment that comes with experience, to lead one of the world's premier opera houses. He has stepped into shoes several sizes too large for him. One could protest, of course, that he is not artistic director but music director. The fact is, however, that whatever Levine's title, he is essentially performing as the artistic director: He is responsible for choosing the repertory and for recommending artists, designers, directors, and choreographers, in addition to being responsible for the total musical experience—selecting singers, conductors, musicians, and chorus masters—which is the specific job of a music director.

Yet even when judged solely on the basis of his performance as music director, Levine has fallen short of what might have been expected. Having developed (1965–70) his talents as assistant to the late George Szell and the Cleveland Orchestra, Levine

a sure command of a sizable symphonic repertoire. At thirty-seven, he is a man of unquestionable musical intellect and unflagging vigor, as well as a fine pianist. It takes more than that, thought, to make a successful music director. Understanding of awareness of vocal nuances, niceties, resources, as well as the ability to use orchestra and performers to their best advantage, are essential. And here Levine's skills are less acute than they should be. In his first two seasons as music director, he requested a certain amount of critical indulgence on the grounds that some of the new works and performers had been scheduled by his predecessor. In the three succeeding seasons, praise for the good work and blame for the bad must be assigned to Levine. And there is much to blame.

To begin with, Levine too often has used the Met podium for a trial run at conducting given work. Every conductor must periodically expand his repertoire by undertaking an opera he has not yet tried. But why use the Met as a testing ground, as he has done with *Parsifal*, *Elektra*, *The Flycatcher*, *Dutchman*, *Otello*, and *Eugene Onegin*, to name just a few?

(Curiously, Levine is perfectly willing to mount operas at the Met for big engagements elsewhere. For instance, he has been readily conducting *Parsifal* at the Met so that he will be well prepared when he fulfills an engagement to direct the opera in Reykjavik, at the centennial performances that will be given there in 1982.)

A further cause for concern is that Levine is too often more committed to his own

conducting career than to the best interests of the Metropolitan. The press has made much of Levine's dedication; after all, it is said, he is at the Met from September until May (with occasional guest appearances at the New York Philharmonic, the Philadelphia Orchestra, and others). But he is required to tour with the company only in alternate years, which leaves him time for recording in May and June. He spends July as music director of the Chicago Symphony's Ravinia Festival, and in August he goes to Salzburg. His time would be better spent in New York, fine-tuning the membership of his company.

A serious problem with Levine's stewardship is his failure to recruit many of the greatest operatic talents for the Met. Where are the major conductors—Leonard Bernstein, Zubin Mehta, Colin Davis, Lorin Maazel, Georg Solti—who were heard at the Met prior to Levine? Levine explains that it is difficult for many of them to make themselves available for the time required for a Met engagement. Nevertheless, during the month of April, for instance, Lorin Maazel found time to conduct a revival of Debussy's *Pelléas et Mélisande* at the Paris Opera, while Seiji Ozawa was doing Puccini's *Tosca* at La Scala in Milan. Undoubtedly it is not easy to lure great talents with their hectic schedules and astronomical price tags to the Metropolitan, but an artistic director must be judged in part by his success in recruiting the best to work with him.

Many of the best singers in the world have likewise been absent from the Met in recent Levine years. Where are, to mention but a few, Joan Sutherland, James

McCracken, Justino Diaz, Shirley Verrett, Mirella Freni, Kiri Te Kanawa, Cesare Siepi, and Martina Arroyo—all of whom have contributed greatly to the Met's success in the past?

One singer particularly favored by Levine has been Renata Scotto, who sometimes seems to constitute Levine's total concept of a "company" where sopranos are concerned. Levine has many reasons to favor Scotto, not the least of which are their plans to continue to record operas together. But to cast Scotto as Manon Lescaut, a teenaged maiden? Politeness forbids reference to Scotto's age (she made her Italian debut in 1954), but not to the condition of a voice that is steadily declining under the pressures of singing a ceaseless succession of roles for which her voice is not suited. As an instance, Scotto was chosen as a leading soprano in the revival of Ponchielli's *La Gioconda* last season. Has anyone ever heard of an operatic soprano equally adept at singing during the same season as Ponchielli's "Suicidio" and Puccini's "In quelle trine morbide" in *Manon Lescaut*?

Another of Levine's questionable decisions is evident in the case of the admirable mezzo-soprano Tatiana Troyanos. The Juilliard-trained singer made her Met debut in the mid-seventies. Her star has kept rising. In this past season, she has performed outstandingly well in Massenet's *Werther* (Charlotte), Verdi's *Don Carlos* (Eboli), and Wagner's *Parsifal* (Kundry). But she has also been called upon to perform Hansel in Humperdinck's *Hansel and Gretel*, in which she stood out only in the sense that she towered over the smallish Gretel

with whom she was cast. I doubt, in any case, that Liebermann would have urged the stately Troyanos to sing Hansel when she was a member of his company at Hamburg.

The relationship between the music director and the artists with whom he works is unquestionably a matter of public concern. When Richard Cassilly, in the title role of this year's broadcast of Verdi's *Otello*, was unable to continue after Act I, an ill-equipped, inexperienced replacement was pressed into service. Had James McCracken been in favor with Levine, the incident might never have occurred.

While Levine the conductor has been reveling in the applause of audiences at the operas he conducts, Levine the music director should have had some sleepless nights about the results of some works (conducted by others) that the Metropolitan has long rated as specialties of the house. A new repertory of nonstandards works has taken their place, and what should be icing on the cake has now become the cake itself.

Certainly there is much to be said on behalf of a theater which, in addition to those productions conducted by Levine, can offer a brilliant fulfillment of Benjamin Britten's *Billy Budd*, under the suitable artistic conducting of Raymond Leppard; the generally well sung (if preposterously staged) *Un Ballo in Maschera*, with Luciano Pavarotti glorifying Verdi's music; the midseason performances of Beethoven's *Fidelio* and Strauss's *Der Rosenkavalier*, with Erich Leinsdorf as their masterful conductor; and earlier in the season, Massenet's *Werther*, in which Troyanos achieved a new career high under Richard Bonynges direction.



But where were the *Aïdas*, the *Rigoletto*, the *Carmens*, and the *Giocondas* of yesteryears? Almost all are now being performed by singers lacking the voice, the personality, or the career background worthy of a theater with the Met's reputation and ticket prices.

When the happenings of this past season are tabulated, I dare say that they will show a stream of new singers making a record number of debuts (more than thirty). Some—perhaps a third—have proper credentials for such consideration, but the majority do not.

Perhaps Levine's most critical problem is his unawareness of the objectives toward which an artistic director must finally strive. An artistic director is responsible for providing his theater with an identity, a vision of what its ultimate artistic goal should be. Levine lacks such vision. Queried about the trend toward multiple debuts, he replied: "New York has the right to have a place in which it can view what is in the international forefront—though what is in the international forefront is not always to my personal or artistic taste . . . . If I were to try to do in an international theater what I do in my personal and artistic taste, I wouldn't be able to do 24 operas a year . . . ."

But an artistic director should do what is best for his "personal and artistic taste." That's what he is there for. "The international forefront" is not a standard by which to judge singers or conductors. A strong artistic director has his own vision and shapes his theater to conform to that vision. We have not addressed in this piece

whether Levine the conductor is sufficiently talented to hold the podium at the Met, much less the music director's office. Indisputably, he is. Levine, in the words of Schuyler Chapin, is "one of the few conductors whom every singer wants to work with. He has a towering talent. He gives a singer a feeling of support and security."

Nonetheless, at this point in his career, Levine still has much to learn as a conductor of the opera. He has a tendency to confuse physical energy with creative vitality. Louder does not mean greater penetration into a composer's intent. A *fortissimo* in an Italian opera like Giuseppe Verdi's *Don Carlos* (which he otherwise conducts well) cannot be equated with a *fortissimo* in a German opera like Wagner's *The Flying Dutchman* (with which Levine was artistically ill at ease, and which he conducted for the first time at the Met).

On March 29 of this year, a new production of Giacomo Puccini's *Manon Lescaut* was broadcast. I listened to it at home, with an accumulating impression of tonal inconsistency. What was wrong? The orchestral execution was precise, every note in place. A glance at the score provided the answer: Rather than rising and falling in the dynamic patterns carefully prescribed by the composer, the music came through in a ceaseless *mezzaforte*, save when it became *fortissimo*.

But whatever Levine's strengths and weaknesses as an operatic conductor, as a music director and de facto artistic director of the Met he has been decidedly miscast.

In its present state of void and vacuum in the artistic decision-making function, the Met is more than ever in need of a trained,

professional, authoritative opera expert. He should be a man (or woman) able to give a detached, clear-headed evaluation of everything that happens on the stage and in the pit in every performance. And, moreover, he should have the power to demand an accounting for shortcomings.

This is a plea not on behalf of any person, but on behalf of the principle that central authority is indispensable to the success of a major operatic venture. When William

Rockefeller said that the Met had “outgrown the need” for a general manager, he betrayed a woeful ignorance of what makes an operatic institution function to the best of its human resources.

The Met will celebrate the beginning of its second century October 22, 1983. Audiences can only hope that by that time, the Met will once again have the kind of artistic leadership under which the company—note: the *company*—had its greatest years.

# The Accordion: Its History from Ancient China to Carnegie Hall

by Douglas Ward  
*Contemporary Keyboard*, May 1980

Some people call it the “stomach Steinway,” but under one name or another, in various designs and designations, the accordion has been a familiar instrument to generations of music lovers, and is now recognized as capable of producing artistically sensitive performance in all musical styles.

Not everyone is familiar with its proud story, however. Indeed, Chinese tradition allows us to trace its roots back to the very birth of music itself, an event pinpointed in the *Book of Chronicles (Shu-Ching)* as occurring during the reign of the legendary Yellow Emperor,” Huang Ti, around the year 3000 B.C. Huang, whose other accomplishments included the invention of boats, money, and religious sacrifice, is said to have sent the noted scholar Ling Sun to the western mountain regions of his domain with the tricky assignment of finding a way to reproduce the song of the

phoenix bird. Ling returned with the cheng or sheng, thus simultaneously capturing music for mankind and taking the first step toward the genesis of the accordion.

The cheng is in fact the first known instrument to use the free vibrating reed principle, which is the basis of the accordion's sound production. Shaped to resemble the phoenix, the cheng had between thirteen and twenty-four bamboo pipes, a small gourd which acted as a resonator box and wind chamber, and a mouthpiece. Other instruments using a free vibrating reed were developed in ancient Egypt and Greece, and were depicted in many bas reliefs.

Virtually unchanged after centuries of use, the cheng attracted the attention of European musicians and craftsmen after being taken to Russia around the year 1770, but assertions that this marked the introduction of the free-vibrating reed principle in Europe are inaccurate. Among the earlier variations on this design in the West was the portative, whose clear and mellow sound was widely heard in England during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. The portative consisted of a small keyboard, bellows, and reed pipes, and was strapped onto the player. The regal, later termed the Bible regal because of its wide use in churches, was the next step along this line, with a keyboard, one or two sets of bellows, and, unlike the accordion and other open-reed instruments, close beating oboe-like reeds, which eventually lost popularity due to a tendency to go out of tune easily. This instrument was frequently employed for accompanying madrigal singers between the fifteenth and eighteenth centuries.

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Cyrillus Damian, a Viennese instrument maker, has often been credited with the creation of the first true accordion. He was, in fact, the first to patent an instrument of that name, having received royal patronage for his "invention" in 1829. Damian's design featured two to four bass keys that produced chords within a range of an octave. But the first true accordion made its appearance in 1822, when a German instrument maker named Christian Friedrich Buschmann (1775–1832) put some expanding bellows onto a small portable keyboard, with free vibrating reeds inside the instrument itself. He dubbed it the hand-aeoline, and helped spread its fame in 1828 by leaving Berlin and going on tour with it.

There were actually many varieties of the free-vibrating reed instrument developed during the early 1800s. Some of them are still quite well known today. Sir Charles Wheatstone (1802–1875) was awarded the British Patent No. 5803 for his concertina in 1829. Heinrich Band (1821–1860) of Krefeld, Germany, invented the bandoneon in 1840; this square-shaped instrument, played by pressing finger buttons, is popular with Argentine tango bands. That same year Alexandre Debain finished his harmonium in Paris. In this pipeless organ, commonly found in churches and households until the advent of electric organs in the 1930s, air is passed to the reed blocks via foot-operated bellows. In some early models a second person was required to pump air into the instrument through bellows attached to the rear of the keyboard. Modern electric reed organs use an electric motor blower, much like the a reverse vac-

uum cleaner, to vibrate the reeds. Other early instruments of this school included the orchestrion (1789), melodeon (1805), uranion (1810), orgue-expressif (1810), perpodeon (1817), physarmonia (1818), aura (1821), symphonium (1824), and typotone (1829).

As the renown for accordions grew, so did a demand for manuals on how to play them. The first such textbook, featuring both original music and arrangements of familiar pieces, was written by A. Reissner and published in Paris in 1832. Another tutorial volume, Pichenot's *Methode pour l'accordeon*, appeared later that year. In 1834 Adolph Müller published his instructional book in Vienna, and since then the music market has sustained a flood of similar programs, with about thirty titles published during the 1860s alone.

Meanwhile, from 1830 onwards, the development of the accordion continued at an accelerating pace. Still, there were some important differences between the instruments of that era and those of today. For one, early accordions did not have shoulder straps that allowed the player to hold the instrument close to the body. The older models were played by placing the thumb, the little finger, and sometimes the fourth finger of the right hand under the treble keyboard, leaving only the remaining two or three fingers free to press the keys. The thumb of the left hand was also placed under the instrument to steady it, with only the second and fifth fingers used for playing. Most players today wear double straps, although single-strapped accordions, which leave the keyboard at a less upright angle, are popular in the Soviet Union.

Additionally, early accordions, like the doneon (and, for that matter, the harmonica) that exists today, produced different notes on the press and draw of the bellows. Thus, if the C key were pressed to produce that note on the opening of the bellows, the note D might sound when the bellows were closed. These instruments are characterized as diatonic, and the pitch of their notes was determined by the placement of the keys and the reeds by each maker.

The chromatic accordion, which produced the same note on the press and the draw of the bellows, came into use in 1850 when an accordionist named Walter requested that one be custom-built for him. This model, incidentally, also featured twelve bass buttons, cleverly arranged so that all twelve key signatures could be accommodated.

One interesting development from this period was the appearance of what subsequently became known as the Schrammel accordion, first used in 1877 with a quartet comprising an accordion, two violins, and so guitar. The Schrammel had fifty-two buttons arranged in three rows that produced the same notes, together with twelve basses that produced different notes, on the press and draw of the bellows. This model was used often at Viennese gatherings and can still be heard today, but its popularity is limited because of its small range of notes and the difficulty with which it is mastered.

It seems clear that at this stage the accordion was being conceived of as a portable type of organ. Pipe organs had of course become extremely sophisticated by

then, with tones produced through open-ended wooden or metal flue pipes of up to eight feet (for the lowest C then in the instrument's range) in length, and with its own free-vibrating reeds set in a brass plate, to be activated when the Reed stop is engaged. This exact design was incorporated into the accordions of that era, with several brass or steel reeds embedded into a long wooden block in a somewhat simplified version of the modern accordion design.

So when the first piano accordion, or the first accordion to feature a piano-style ivory keyboard, was produced in Vienna in 1863, many performers regarded it as a means of liberating themselves, to a limited extent, from being confined to their massive and immobile walls of pipes. As with the modern accordion, these keys were much smaller than those on the piano, and more rounded to allow for faster playing. Design requests from musicians helped refine the shape and appearance of the accordion keyboard even more over the next several years. One of these artists, Pietro Deiro, brought his custom-built piano accordion to the United States and, thanks to a successful New York concert at the Washington Square Theatre in 1909, earned a reputation for himself as the father of American accordion playing.

During the early part of the twentieth century the leading accordion manufacturers began increasing their output and, thanks to pressure from professional players, settling on a general standard size and shape for the instrument, with nineteen and a half inches the agreed length for a forty-one note keyboard. One company in

particular managed to establish a solid slot for itself in the industry hierarchy. It is commonly accepted that Matthias Hohner (1833–1902) was to the accordion what Henry Ford was to the automobile—an enterprising figure who made his product available to a great number of people at reasonable prices. Originally a clockmaker in Trossingen, Germany, Hohner had begun building accordions at his workshop in 1857, but by roughly twenty years after his death the business he had founded was creating them by mass production.

Today the accordion is truly an international phenomenon. There are several manufacturers of fine accordions in the U.S., but their output is small compared to their European counterparts. Large contemporary producers are located in Germany, France, and the U.S.S.R., where the bavan, an accordion with a button keyboard, is frequently played. But by far the most voluminous companies are in Italy. About 75 percent of the instruments built there are exported around the world; one firm, Scandali, a subsidiary of Farfisa, does an especially good business with the Soviet Union. And on a recent trip to China I found it evident that the instrument is being built in large numbers there too; every school equipped with a piano seems to have at least one accordion as well.

Let us now take a more detailed look at the construction of the modern accordion. Nearly 60,000 separate parts are used in building each instrument. About 300 square inches of prime kidskin are utilized for the reed tongues and for the creation of airtight seals under each pallet, the small wooden

block that lifts when its particular treble key is pressed, to allow the air to blow through. The complete instrument typically weighs from twenty-six to thirty pounds.

The full-sized accordion has forty-one piano keys, 120 basses, and a pair of bellows between these two sections. The treble keys begin at F below Middle C and rise chromatically to A three octaves above Middle C. Although patterned after the piano keyboard, the treble keys are necessarily much smaller. The 120 buttons of the bass section are arranged for the left hand in six rows of twenty buttons each. Nearest to the bellows is the counterbass row, and next to it is the fundamental row. Only single notes or octave couplings of these notes can be played on these two rows. The next four rows consist of buttons which produce major, minor, seventh, and diminished chords via a complex arrangement of rods, pins, and valves. The pitch and structure of each chord is determined according to the specifications of the manufacturer.

The casing that houses the constituent parts is made of strong prime-quality wood and its outermost surface is coated with celluloid. This coating is sanded, buffed, and then polished to a high gloss finish. The woods and the celluloid are aged for three or more years in order to prevent the cracking and shrinkage often evident in poorly made models.

Accordion reeds are normally made from high-quality Swedish blue steel, German steel, or brass, and are set into aluminum plates of various sizes. The plates are then waxed into wooden or, as in the Russian instruments, brass blocks of up to eighteen



ches in length. Reeds are often hand-made to insure the best possible sound. In fact, the reedmaker may spend a working lifetime perfecting his or her skills, and then pass them on to the next generation.

Registers are to the accordion what stops and tabs are to the organ; they are even identified by organ stop nomenclature. Most full-sized accordions feature four sets of treble reeds—one designated sixteen inches, one eight inches, another eight inches set tuned slightly sharp for brilliance, and a final set of four inch reeds—five sets of bass reeds, all of which may be freely mixed in various combinations. Many concert accordions have as many as twelve treble and ten bass registers. Some instruments have even more, though many of these registers may duplicate registers set at the opposite end of the keyboard, thus allowing for easier changes in setting. Registers are changed by activating a coupled slide mechanism that closes off or opens one or more particular sets of reeds.

Most of the better accordions produced today include something called a cassotto, or double cassotto, tone chamber. This unit is usually situated at right angles to the normal setting of the reed blocks, and is constructed of highly lacquered wood or aluminum, as a result of which the one or two sets of treble reeds enclosed in the chamber produce a mellow roundness and deep resonance when played. When a register is pressed for these reeds, the register slide mechanism closes off air access automatically to reeds outside of the chamber, though combinations of, for example, one reed in and one reed out of the chamber can

be made, allowing for a mellow and a brilliant tone at the same time.

As the old-style jazz pianist might say, strides have also been made in the bass range. Thanks to the free-bass system, the left-hand range has been extended by as much as four octaves or more over the original range of twelve notes, or less than one octave, thus making it easier to perform pieces written for other keyboards with left-hand parts encompassing more than an octave. On some instruments this was done by adding the three extra rows of bass buttons, often termed *bassetti* or *baritone* basses, while modification of the 120 bass rods and the valve mechanism that comprise the converter system in other models accomplishes the same end. In both of these free-bass designs, the overall range of the instrument may now be expanded to more than eight octaves, or slightly larger than the scope of a grand piano.

There are advantages and disadvantages to both of these approaches. The converter system accordion seldom weighs more than a normal instrument, while the models with the extra bass rows are heavier. The latter design also requires that the performer learn a second system of bass fingering, with some occasionally uncomfortable reaches. In the end, of course, it is up to the player to choose which system is best suited to his or her tastes.

The accordion of today preserves its traditional distinction of being able to sustain notes and chords almost indefinitely, and it remains one of the minority of instruments that is capable of playing melody, harmony, counterpoint, and rhythm at the same time. In addition, many contemporary

accordions contain internal microphone systems which provide ample potential volume for recitals in large concert halls. There also exists a new breed of electronic accordions, on which many of the new synthesizer and organ effects desired by electronic musicians can be produced via contacts under each treble and bass key. The signal is fed through them to various oscillator and voicing circuits which may be contained within the bellows, under the treble grille, or in an external enclosure. This truly gives the instrument an unusual dual acoustic and electronic character. Other accordions are being marketed with built-in monophonic and polyphonic synthesizer modules. There is even an accordion which contains electronic circuitry, an amplifier, and speakers, powered by built-in batteries.

With all these improvements, it is no surprise that the parameters of performance have also grown in recent years. Music for piano, celeste, harpsichord, harmonium, and organ may now be played on the free bass accordion without having to alter a note of the score, thanks to the greater freedom allowed the left hand. And there is a substantial repertoire of works specifically written for accordion by such composers as Tchaikovsky, Berg, Paul Creston, Henry Cowell, Walter Riegger, Alan Hovhaness, Tito Guidotti, Lukas Foss, James Nightingale, William Schimmel, Ole Schmidt, Tjorborn Lundquist, Hugo Hermann, Richard Rodney Bennett, Douglas Ward, Wolfgang Jacobi, Nicolas Tchaikin, and

many others. New works are also frequently commissioned by the American Accordionists Association, the Accordion Teachers Guild, and other organizations.

About thirty-five colleges and universities in the U.S. now accept music students majoring in accordion, a fact that reflects the instrument's unquestioned legitimacy in classical music. It has been seen on the concert platform at Lincoln Center, Carnegie Hall, and the Albert and Festival Halls in England, and has appeared as the featured solo instrument with the New York Philharmonic, the Boston Pops Orchestra, the Philadelphia Orchestra, and the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra of London.

But it has also made inroads into the field of popular music. The Beatles, Billy Joel, Neil Diamond, the Rolling Stones, Emerson, Lake and Palmer, Jimmy Webb, the Beach Boys, Bob Dylan, and a host of other artists have used the accordion on records and onstage, while it has proven itself as ideal for soloing and for blending well with the clarinet, the saxophone, and the flute in jazz settings too. The jazz world has seen such notable accordionists as Art Van Damme, Mat Matthews, Tommy Gumina, Leon Sash, Ernie Felice, Angel di Pippo, and Jack Emblow.

The message behind this overview of the accordion is that those who have disdained the instrument before might want to take another look at this versatile and compact axe. It doesn't just play polkas, you know. The accordion has not only come of age today, it is well on its way to tomorrow.

## Copyright Simplified for the Working Musician

Walter Wager

*International Musician*, May 1980

If you're a professional musician who knows almost nothing about copyright, and you're a bit embarrassed and uneasy. Don't worry. Some 95 percent of the attorneys in the U.S. and Canada know little more than you about it. So few of them are ever called upon to handle a copyright case that many law schools don't even offer a course on the subject. A single course wouldn't be much help anyway, for copyright cases tend to be technical. Suits involving copyright disputes are usually handled by specialists. Copyright can be that complex, and that's the bad news. That's all the bad news. The good news is that a working musician only has to understand a few basics in a portion of the dreaded copyright struggle. Don't be intimidated by the overall size and complexity of the subject. Most of it doesn't concern you at all. The great bulk of it—the tricky and messy parts—relates to composers and lyricists, music publishers and the many different kinds of music

users. These users are radio and television stations and networks, nightclubs, film and TV and video-disk production companies, airlines, theatres, jukebox operators, concert halls, hotels, wired music systems such as Muzak, record companies, social and country clubs, stadia et cetera.

The minor fraction of the copyright law and system that touches a working musician isn't that complicated. You can understand the important fundamentals in one careful reading. Without becoming an expert, a bare-bones "survival" knowledge should keep you out of trouble.

Don't put it off. That could be a major mistake. Even though you're a wonderfully creative free spirit and an outstanding talent, you can't afford not to acquire and digest this information. You could get burned badly—in two ways. The bedrock of American copyright law and practice today is the U.S. Copyright Act of 1976, and violations of that statute can be costly. The minimum "statutory damages" for each infringement are \$250, and can go to \$10,000—or more.

That's not all. The 1976 legislation, which updated and replaced the long obsolete 1909 statute, also provides that "any person who infringes a copyright willfully and for purposes of commercial advantage or private financial gain shall be fined not more than \$10,000 or imprisoned for not more than a year, or both." Only a few infringers are likely to face criminal prosecution, but why risk it?

You'll be encouraged to find that the copyright system isn't really mysterious, and is based on common sense, as are most of our fundamental legal principles. Zero-

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ing in specifically on the copyright law itself, let's take it from the top.

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## What is Copyright?

Copyright is a property right. It recognizes the value of what lawyers call "intellectual property." The idea is simple and sound. What a man or woman creates with his/her head is worth something, and is just as valuable as something you'd make with your hands. A product of your mind—whether it be a song or a symphony, a book or a play, a poem or a magazine, etc.—is your property. No one else can use your property without your permission. In the copyright vocabulary, the word for that permission is license.

The 1976 U.S. statute—and the Canadian law, which may be revised before long—spell out what the copyright holder owns. Actually, a copyright is a bundle of several rights that the owner (lawyers sometimes prefer the grander term "proprietor") controls exclusively. Other people or firms may be licensed by the owner to use or exploit these various rights, and 999 times out of 1,000 there's a license fee or royalty arrangement.

The rights are worth a lot, so hundreds of millions of dollars are paid for the licenses each year. Turning to a single part of the copyright community, President Leonard Feist of the National Music Publishers' Association recently estimated in his new

book on "Popular Music Publishing in America" that the 1978 gross income of the U.S. music publishing business—which exists solely on copyright licensing income—exceeded \$600,000,000. Half of that went on to composers and lyricists. Some of that \$300,000,000 went directly to the writers from the three U.S. performing rights licensing organizations, whose 1978 income Feist computed at more than \$190,000,000. It probably exceeded \$200,000,000 in 1979.

Copyright goes back hundreds of years and is in the law books of almost every country. It is a remarkably logical solution to a problem. If a nation wants to encourage people to write songs, books, etc., it has to find a way for them to earn a living from what they create. This income will permit them to concentrate on creating. By giving copyright owners certain exclusive rights in their creations, countries provide for a flow of license fees from the various users who pay for permission to exercise some of those rights. It is this income that supports writers and publishers and their families, and allows the creators to work at creating. Even with this system, only a small percentage of writers—musical or other—succeed in supporting themselves solely by writing. Without copyright, no one could afford to treat creating as anything more than an obsession or a hobby.

While interested in encouraging creation, governments have also been worried about protecting the public's access to these works. Copyright laws have been designed to limit the term of the exclusivity, which most statutes fix at the death of the creator plus fifty years. That half century is to pro-

the some income protection for surviving spouse and children. After the copyright term (i.e. period) expires, the work is in the public domain. In non-legal language, anyone can then use it or any of the rights that were once exclusive—without paying a cent for any license or permission. It is not anyone's property anymore.

### What Are the Exclusive Rights?

The 1976 U.S. law specifies five exclusive rights which the copyright owner may exercise or authorize others to exercise. These are the rights to:

- (1) reproduce the copyrighted work in copies or phonorecords. This means printing or duplicating sheet music or folios, and making records, tapes, cassettes, etc.
- (2) prepare derivative works based on the copyrighted work. That could be an opera based on a book, or an arrangement of a work already copyrighted.
- (3) distribute phonorecords or copies of the copyrighted work to the public by sale or other transfer of ownership, or by rental, lease or lending.
- (4) perform in public certain kinds of copyrighted works. These are literary, dramatic, musical and choreographic creations, as well as pantomimes, motion pictures and other audio-visual works. It is the right to perform these musical works in public that is primarily handled by three competing bulk licensing organizations in the U.S. (BMI, ASCAP and SESAC) and two competing bodies in Canada (CAPAC and PROCAN).
- (5) display publicly certain copyrighted works. This applies to musical, literary, dramatic, graphic or sculptural, choreo-

graphic or pictorial works—including individual images of a motion picture or other audio-visual works and pantomimes.

### How These Rights Affect Musicians

#### (1) The right to reproduce:

You know that you cannot print copies of someone else's copyrighted work without permission, and that "fake" books not authorized/licensed by the song's publisher are illegal and infringements. Both the individual publishers and their trade organizations—the National Music Publishers' Association, which represents pop publishers, and the Music Publishers' Association, the body which unites the symphonic/religious/educational firms—diligently track down those responsible for such illicit print editions and press legal actions against them.

The reason that you can't print other people's songs without permission is that it is stealing—the theft of a property right that belongs to another. What about just one little old Xerox copy of a piece of sheet music? No, that's stealing too, and is an infringement. Even if it's a "hardship" situation in which the music is out of print, you've got to get the permission of the publisher.

The specific ground rules on photocopying under the 1976 law are spelled out in a brief leaflet that the National Music Publishers' Association (110 East 59th Street, New York, New York 10022) distributes free of charge. For your information, professional musicians have not been serious violators of the photocopying limitation. The worst offenders have been schools and church groups. The year 1980 is likely to

see a series of law suits against these infringers.

What about the right to record? This gets a bit more complicated, for there are several parts to the answer. First, for practical purposes the copyright owner's control or veto is limited to the initial recording. The owner can choose who'll make that first version, but after that the 1976 statute provides for a compulsory license. This means that the copyright owner is compelled to grant a license to any record company that asks for it and which pays the royalty (per single sold) fixed in the law.

Compulsory license is a strange U.S. invention that first appeared in the 1909 copyright law, which set the fee at 2 cents. On January 1, 1978, it was raised to 2¾ cents under a specific provision of the 1976 statute. 1980 will see the question of further adjustment of the so-called "mechanical" rate considered by the new and federal Copyright Royalty Tribunal created by the '76 act.

It is the record company—not the musician—that needs the license and pays the royalties. You don't have to worry about this if you're playing on a recording session. The same principles and procedures apply to tapes, of course. Several years ago, a firm counterfeiting hit albums tried to cloak itself in some pretense of legitimacy by seeking compulsory licenses from the publishers. The crooks would pay the writers and publishers, but still rip off the performers and the record company. Nice try, but no cigar. A federal court held that counterfeiters can't demand a compulsory license.

What about taping your own performance—not for sale or distribution but merely to play over for yourself? No one is going to bother you about this, and probably they couldn't anyway. How about making a tape copy of a record or other tape, or taping off the air? There are legal and moral questions involved. You are doing the performers, writers, publishers, and record company out of income. Tens of thousands of pious music lovers rip off the favorites this way each month, with a loss of income estimated at \$400,000,000 a year in the U.S. alone.

It may be convenient, but it isn't moral. Is it legal? That hasn't been decided in North American courts. A U.S. federal judge ruled last year that it was legal to videotape TV shows off the air for home use, but that's being appealed and a final determination may be years away. Until then, well meaning fans will cheerfully continue to deprive music professionals of painfully large sums.

## **(2) The right to prepare derivative works:**

The most common question involves arrangements. If you or your group merely want to make "head" arrangements for your own performances, that's okay. If you simply jot down your ideas on music paper for use in these performances, no one is likely to bother you.

What if you want to make an arrangement to be sold in the form of printed sheet music or as part of a printed folio of songs? You'll need permission from the publisher who is very likely to propose a contract



ering employment for hire. Otherwise, an arrangement could be copyrighted on its own and cut into the income/earnings of the original work.

Some writers have contracts that give them veto power over arrangements by others, and their publishers have to show them the arrangements for approval. Many arrangements are commissioned by the publishers, or by a sub-publisher that specializes in print and has a license from the song's original publisher. The range of costs and fees is large, and an arranger might get a flat payment or a small percentage royalty.

If the "derivative work" that you have in mind is other than an arrangement, you'll need to work out a deal with the publisher to get permission. The publisher's address will probably be on the sheet music, or available from some central music business body such as ASCAP, BMI, SESAC, the NMPA or its Harry Fox Agency, which licenses the recording rights to 4,000 U.S. publishers.

### **The right to distribute phonorecords and copies:**

Since it is not the business of working musicians to distribute, sell, rent, or lease records or sheet music, this doesn't concern them. The statute also bars lending, but this doesn't necessarily mean one musician lending a disk, tape or piece of music to another in a friendly non-commercial way.

### **The right to perform in public:**

There's a lot of confusion on this, and it's easy to understand why. The key is the

word "perform." While you are the actual performer, courts have clearly held that it is not the musician who needs this license. It is the club, radio station, concert hall, etc., that has to get all the permissions for public performances of the hundreds or thousands of songs—not you. To simplify matters, they usually take out bulk licenses from the performing rights organizations. Each organization's license gives the customer the right to offer an unlimited number of public performances of any/all the works of all of the organization's thousands of members.

The users (i.e. customers of ASCAP, BMI, CAPAC, etc.) don't pay separately for each performance, so it won't cost a station a cent more if you play your friend's song—or your own—on a broadcast. A lump sum license fee covers bulk access to each performing rights outfit's total repertoire. It's a simple system, and it works—all over the world. Scores of countries have performing rights licensing societies.

What these societies—here and abroad—license is what they call "small" rights. That means a non-dramatic performance. It would cover a single song or a medley from a musical or an opera, but would not authorize a production number or full production. The rights for a "dramatic" presentation are known as "grand" rights, and users such as theatrical producers, etc., negotiate them from the copyright owner. The musician doesn't.

Keep in mind that the AFM Constitution and By-Laws contains two specific prohibitions that flatly bar members from taking out licenses covering the right to perform. Article 13, Section 34, bars leaders and

members from assuming responsibility for license fees, royalties or possible damages for infringements. Article 24, Section 16, prohibits booking agents from offering contracts that oblige members to pay the license fees or royalties. Paraphrasing the *delicatessen waiter*, this question of performing rights licenses and fees isn't your table.

Don't let anyone tell you that it is. In 1978, the head of a Southern university was annoyed that the "new" 1976 copyright law required—for the first time—educational institutions to take out licenses for the highly profitable campus concerts that brought in top acts at high ticket prices. The irate, thrifty educator tried to launch a movement to stick musicians with the performing rights license fees. It died.

Although you're not responsible for performing rights, pay attention to a club owner who tells you not to play any music licensed by one or another of the licensing societies. He may not have made a deal with that one, and you could cost him a lot of money via unlicensed performances. Act responsibly, as a professional should.

There is one situation in which you'd need a license. If you're the promoter of a concert and rent the hall on a four-walls basis, you'll be responsible for negotiating a license. Not as a musician, but in your capacity of promoter. If all you play is your own songs, you're probably okay without a

license since the licensing outfits are merely collecting for the copyright owner—you.

## **(5) To display publicly:**

This doesn't really affect working musicians.

## **If You Don't Know, Ask**

If you're not sure about what this article covers or if you have other questions, ask. Ask someone who knows, and don't take the word of a friend who finished one year of law school or a cousin who married a city council member. Bring your question to a specialist or a person who has access to a specialist. It is not necessary to consult an expensive copyright lawyer, but you can get in touch with one of the organizations mentioned above—the ones that represent copyright owners. They want to help you avoid infringements, and they should answer promptly. They may be able to field your question over the phone, and with much more authority than some half-informed leader who claims to be an expert.

The organizations of copyright owners have offices in Los Angeles and New York, and some are also in Nashville and other large cities. Check the phone books. Okay, you've just completed the bare-bones and oversimplified course on copyright for the working musician—and you got an A. Now let's get back to music.

## Introduction

Braille Music Reading Questions," a regular feature of the *Musical Mainstream* through 1979, was discontinued last year and replaced by a series of articles about braille music notation in countries outside the United States. The information found in these articles by Bettye Krolick is immensely pertinent to braille music readers. With this issue, we will attempt to broaden the scope by actively soliciting comments, ideas, and questions from readers, along with providing articles about braille music practices. "Braille Music Forum" will be written by Bettye Krolick, author of the *Dictionary of Braille Music Signs* and volunteer music transcriber for the Library of Congress.

—Editor

## Braille Music Forum: Learning to Read Braille Music

Bettye Krolick

This issue's column contains a series of questions about the study of the braille music code. Your comments, suggestions, and questions are solicited. Please write—in type, braille, or on tape—at 602 Nuttura Road, Champaign, IL 61820. I will report your concerns in this forum.

### How do people learn to read the braille music code?

They learn the code in public schools, through private teachers, or on their own. In the past braille music was taught for the

most part by a blind teacher to students in schools for the blind. Instruction often began at the first grade level; a child was exposed to the music code and was expected to participate in music activities at least through elementary school. Today the situation is different. Music for multi-handicapped students with the schools for the blind is by necessity more therapy oriented, with less reading taking place. Most blind children, however, are now educated with sighted children in public school systems.

After conducting workshops in twenty states during the past five years, I have found that children mainstreamed into the public schools learn braille through a resource or itinerant instructor who has little or no knowledge of the braille music code. Both teacher and students are often unaware that a vast quantity of braille music exists. Furthermore, many students are never introduced to the possibility of musical activity with their sighted peers. Today those who learn the music code outside of schools for blind persons basically teach themselves to read it, while working with a sighted teacher who does not read braille.

### Is the music code "terribly" complex?

This question is asked frequently by teachers. As I travel across the United States helping itinerant teachers and students, I find the most difficult part for teachers is their ingrained feeling that the music code is complex. Students, on the other hand, do not have the problem of a preconceived attitude. Within one hour they can, with instruction, read all the pitches and rhythmic values, and enjoy simple



songs. Admittedly, there are complexities to the code, but not at these beginning stages. New resources are available in braille and in print to answer questions as students progress.

## What are the resources for beginners?

*How to Read Braille Music, Book I*, by Bettye Krolick, is the self-help introduction to braille music reading written at the fifth grade level; *Primer of Braille Music, New Revised Edition*, compiled by Edward Jenkins, includes many reading examples. These should suffice for the beginning stages, and with the help of a teacher can be used below the fifth grade level. As new signs are introduced in intermediate music, definitions may appear in the index of signs in the back of *How to Read Braille Music, Book I*. Besides definitions, this index shows the relationship of a sign to a note; that is, whether an accent affects the preceding note or the one that follows it. A more complete listing of signs is found in the *Index of Signs for Braille Music Notation*. Finally, the most complete resource is the *Dictionary of Braille Music Signs*, by this author. In addition to the definitions of signs and their relationships to musical notes, it explains formats for music published in different countries and has a format identification chart to help readers locate specific information quickly.

All of the above resources are available in print and in braille and may be obtained on loan from Music Section, National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped, Washington, D.C. 20542. The following titles may be purchased: *How to Read Braille Music, Book I*. Print:

Stipes Publishing Company, 10-12 Ches Street, Champaign, Illinois 61820. \$2.00; Braille: NBA Braille Book Bank, 422 Clinton Avenue South, Rochester, New York 14620. \$2.50; *Primer of Braille Music*, New Revised Edition, 1960. Printed by American Printing House for the Blind (APH), 1839 Frankfort Avenue, Louisville, Kentucky 40206. \$3.65; Braille: APH. \$1.85.

## Do you teach that the names of the notes are letters of the alphabet?

When most children were taught in school for the blind, many teachers avoided this approach. They felt that children learning literary and music braille simultaneously would find it confusing to learn that a literary D is a C in music, a literary E is a D in music, etc. In a self-teaching situation the student is older and already has a working knowledge of literary braille. I find that most nine-year-olds are not confounded by this alphabetic juxtaposition. I show them the alphabetic representation of the C major scale:

⠠⠠ ⠠⠠ ⠠⠠ ⠠⠠ ⠠⠠ ⠠⠠ ⠠⠠ ⠠⠠

I suggest they remember that a musical D looks like the literary D because it could represent the musical syllable "do" to start the scale. Since each note name is formed the same in braille music regardless of its octave or its rhythmic value, the repetition of those seven symbols soon makes their recognition quite automatic.

Students are taught to examine the upper part of a cell for its name and then to look

the lower part of the same cell to discover its rhythmic value. For beginners dot 1 is a half note, dot 6 is a quarter, dots 3 and 6 make a whole note, and if neither 3 or 6 appear, the note is an eighth. I introduce dots 3 and 6 for sixteenth notes so the students will know about the possible meaning of rhythmic value dots. As soon as students are shown a braille measure containing one whole note between two measures full of eighths and sixteenths, they understand how to tell the difference by count, even though whole note and sixteenth note signs are identical.

**What are the problem areas for people learning the music code on their own?**  
 The brief time I meet with new readers (usually one hour), there are three areas I see as potential problems because they are stylistically different than print, and the student is likely to be working with a sighted teacher who refers to print music. We discuss doubling, grouping, and the use of braille repeats. Braille readers know the principle of doubling from the use of the italic sign: if that sign is repeated, every word is italicized until another italic sign is present to mark the end of the italicized passage. This principle is common in braille music. In contrast to a print page that may contain more than fifty staccato marks, the braille page will have only one, two at the beginning of the staccato passage and one at the end.

Grouping, a method of combining notes, has no meaning until students progress to the use of sixteenth and thirty-second notes, when they can be shown examples of how clearly beats stand out when sixteenths are

grouped with only the first note of each group containing the lower dots. Here is a simple example in four-four meter with the first three beats being sixteenths and the measure ending with a quarter note:



Students should understand that braille music contains special braille repeats in addition to any repeats that may occur in prints. These braille repeat signs are well worth learning because they make the music easier to read and to memorize. The resources expand upon these brief explanations, of course.

I am interested in hearing from readers regarding this question, as no one has yet reported problems to me.

### **Is it worth the trouble to learn this special code of braille if I already play or sing by ear?**

Being able to participate by ear is indicative that a person has enough musical talent to justify learning to read the code, and many have discovered that the code is not nearly as difficult as they thought it would be.

People appreciate being able to learn music independently, and to know what dynamics and performance details are written with the notes. The thrill of playing in the school band has enriched the lives of many mainstreamed youngsters. For those who develop a lifetime interest combined with outstanding talent, braille music is absolutely essential. For the vast majority who want to sing in the church choir, enjoy a

home electronic organ, or play popular songs for friends, braille music is a key to expanded independence and enjoyment.

### **What about the student who is not a braille reader?**

This very serious question is pertinent to far too many visually handicapped students.

The ease of using tape recorders and the fascination with modern electronic aids has drawn attention away from the fact that without a reading ability in braille, blind

persons are not literate. They cannot take notes and read them back, look up facts in a reference book, or examine the written word for spelling, punctuation, and style. Blind musicians can hear music, but they cannot write it or examine the composer's written dynamics, nuances, and editorial markings without reading braille; on the other hand, blind musicians who learn braille skills can make use of over 25,000 musical compositions in the NLS collection.



following works are available on loan in the Music Section, National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C. 20542.

Braille and recorded materials may also be purchased from their respective producers. Large-print scores are available on loan. These listings show, where possible, composer, title, Music Section catalog number, print publisher, and producer. Materials in the music collection are available on two-month loan, renewable on request.

## Resources

**Singers Only.** Box 10, North Hollywood, California 91603

**B.** Royal National Institute for the Deaf, 224 Great Portland Street, London, W1N 6AA, England

**B.** Regione Toscana—Stamperia Musicale, Istituto Nazionale dei Ciechi “Vittorio Emanuele II,”—Via Aurelio Ruffini n. 2, Postale n. 5/1257, Firenze 50131, Italy

**B.** Verein zur Förderung der Blindenbildung e.V., 26 Bleekstrasse, Hannover-Land 3000, West Germany

## Braille

## Resources

### Organ Music

**Rossi, Marco Enrico**

**Drei Stücke** op. 118, nos. 1, 6, 9

**BRM 26351**

**Vogel VFB**

**Braun, W.**

**Andante Religioso und Fuge**

**BRM 26364**

**publisher undetermined VFB**

**Weihnachts-Fantasie** op. 6

**BRM 26363**

**Vogel VFB**

**Bruckner, Anton**

**Zwei Orgelstücke** **BRM 26363**

**Böhm VFB**

## Piano Music

**Chopin, Frédéric**

**Ballades** **BRM 26142**

**Ricordi SNB**

**Concerto No. 2** op. 21, F minor

**BRM 26138**

**Peters SNB**

**Mazurkas** **BRM 26145**

**Ricordi SNB**

**Nocturnes** **BRM 26140**

**Ricordi SNB**

**Sonatas** **BRM 26143**

**Ricordi SNB**

**Mendelssohn-Bartholdy, Felix**

**Lieder ohne Wort** **BRM 26155**

**Ricordi SNB**

**Pischna, Josef**

**Il Grande Pischna** **BRM 26194**

**Carisch SNB**

## Popular Music

**Crying** **BRM 22975**

**by Roy Orbison**

**RNIB**

**Suicide Is Painless      BRM 22971**

by J. Mandel

RNIB

**Use It Up and Wear It out**

**BRM 26346**

by L. Russell Brown

RNIB

**Waterfalls      BRM 26347**

by Paul McCartney

RNIB

## Violin and Piano Music

**Mozart, Wolfgang Amadeus**

**Sonata K. 293a (301), G major**

**BRM 26377**

Peters VFB

**Sonata K. 293b (302), E major**

**BRM 26368**

Peters VFB

**Sonata K. 293c (303), C major**

**BRM 26378**

Peters VFB

**Sonata K. 293d (305), A major**

**BRM 26373**

Peters VFB

**Sonata K. 296, C major**

**BRM 26374**

Peters VFB

**Sonata K. 300c (304), E minor**

**BRM 26356**

Peters VFB

**Sonata K. 3001d (306), D major**

**BRM 26367**

Peters VFB

**Sonata K. 373a (379), G major**

**BRM 26372**

Peters VFB

**Sonata K. 374d (376), F major**

**BRM 26369**

Peters VFB

**Sonata K. 374e (377), F major**

**BRM 26360**

Peters VFB

**Sonata K. 374f (380), E flat**

**major      BRM 26354**

Peters VFB

**Sonata K. 378 (317d), B flat**

**major      BRM 26371**

Peters VFB

**Sonata K. 385c (403), C major**

**BRM 26350**

Peters VFB

**Sonata K. 385e (402), A major**

**BRM 26357**

Peters VFB

**Sonata K. 481, E flat major**

**BRM 26376**

Peters VFB

**Sonata K. 454, B flat major**

**BRM 26370**

Peters VFB

**Sonata K. 526, A major**

**BRM 26361**

Peters VFB

**Sonata K. 547, F major**

**BRM 26366**

Peters VFB

## Large Print

### Librettos

**Bizet, Georges**

**Carmen      LPM 457**

G. Schirmer

**nod, Charles Francois**

**st LPM 447**

Schirmer

**art, Johann Chrysostom Wolfgang**

**adeus**

**Giovanni LPM 453**

Schirmer

**Nozze di Figaro LPM 459**

Schirmer

**cini, Giacomo**

**Boheme LPM 452**

co Colombo

**ea LPM 448**

Schirmer

**andot LPM 456**

ordi

**sini, Gioacchino Antonio**

**Barber of Seville LPM 454**

Schirmer

**uss, Richard**

**Rosenkavalier LPM 446**

sey and Hawkes

**di, Giuseppe**

**a LPM 445**

Schirmer

**oletto LPM 450**

co Colombo

**Traviata LPM 451**

ordi

**rovatore LPM 449**

Schirmer

**gner, Richard**

**engrin LPM 455**

Schirmer

**Die Meistersinger von**

**Nürnberg LPM 458**

G. Schirmer

**Scores—Chord Organ, Organ, Piano, or  
Guitar**

**All-Time Requests LPM 403**

EZ Play Music. Hal Leonard Publishing  
Corp.

Ballad of Easy Rider

Blueberry Hill

Button Up Your Overcoat

C'est Magnifique

Darling, Je Vous Aime Beaucoup

D-I-V-O-R-C-E

Galway Bay

Gimme a Little Kiss

Heartaches

I Don't Know Why

I'll Get By

I Talk to the Trees

A Little Bitty Tear

Look to the Rainbow

Old Piano Roll Blues

Pigalle

Thoroughly Modern Millie

Wedding Bell Blues

What Kind of Fool Am I?

Yakety Sax

You Can't Be True Dear

**Christmas Time LPM 402**

EZ Play Music. Hal Leonard Publishing  
Corp.

Angels from the Realms of Glory

Angels We Have Heard on High

Away in a Manger

Deck the Halls

The First Noel



The Friendly Beasts  
God Rest Ye Merry, Gentlemen  
Good Christian Men Rejoice  
Good King Wenceslas  
Hark! The Herald Angels Sing  
It Came upon a Midnight Clear  
Jingle Bells  
Jolly Old St. Nicholas  
Joy to the World  
O Christmas Tree  
O Come All Ye Faithful  
O Come Little Children  
Silent Night  
Up on the Housetop  
What Child Is This?

## Country Pickin's LPM 410

EZ Play Music. Hal Leonard Publishing Corp.

Abilene  
Deep in the Heart of Texas  
Engine, Engine Number Nine  
Hello Walls  
I Can't Stop Loving You  
I'll Never Slip Around Again  
I'm a Fool to Care  
I'm So Lonesome I Could Cry  
It Wasn't God Who Made Honky Tonk Angels  
It's All Over but the Crying  
Kansas City Star  
Mockin' Bird Hill  
My Adobe Hacienda  
My Elusive Dreams  
Night Train to Memphis  
Nobody's Child  
Oh, Lonesome Me  
There Goes My Everything  
Wabash Cannon Ball

Walking in the Sunshine  
Worried Man Blues

## Danceable Favorites LPM 408

EZ Play Music. Hal Leonard Publishing Corp.

Anema E Core  
Comme Ci, Comme Ça  
Domino  
Downtown  
I Know a Place  
I Want to Be Wanted  
I Wish You Love  
I'll Never Smile Again  
If You Love Me, Really Love Me  
It's Not Unusual  
Jim  
Let It Be Me  
My Love  
Our Day Will Come  
Quiet Nights of Quiet Stars  
Strangers in the Night  
Summertime in Venice  
A Sunday Kind of Love  
Tammy  
Teach Me Tonight  
Till Then

## Disney Spotlights LPM 409

EZ Play Music. Hal Leonard Publishing Corp.

The Ballad of Davy Crockett  
The Bare Necessities  
Chim Chim Cher-ee  
The Elegant Captain Hook  
Feed the Birds  
Following the Leader  
I Wonder  
Jolly Holiday  
My Own Home

ever Smile at a Crocodile  
 ice Upon a Dream  
 ter Pan  
 e Second Star to the Right  
 ng a Smiling Song  
 umps  
 percalifragilisticexpialidocious  
 ou Can Fly You Can Fly! You Can  
 Fly!

**Side Singalong LPM 413**  
 EZ Play Music. Hal Leonard Publishing

ouette  
 uld Lang Syne  
 autiful Dreamer  
 cycle Built for Two  
 ue Tail Fly  
 ementine  
 own in the Valley  
 r He's a Jolly Good Fellow  
 oodnight Ladies  
 il, Hail the Gang's All Here  
 me Sweet Home  
 Love You Truly  
 I Take You Home Again, Kathleen  
 e Been Working on the Railroad  
 the Evenin' by the Moonlight  
 annie with the Light Brown Hair  
 st a Song at Twilight  
 ttle Brown Jug  
 an on the Flying Trapeze  
 y Bonnie  
 d River Valley  
 e'll Be Comin' Round the Mountain  
 ere Is a Tavern in the Town  
 hile Strolling through the Park

**Folk World LPM 412**

EZ Play Music. Hal Leonard Publishing  
 Corp.

Believe Me If All Those Endearing  
 Young Charms  
 Blue Bells of Scotland  
 Carry Me Back to Old Virginny  
 Cielito Lindo  
 Cockles and Mussels  
 Come to the Sea (Vieni Sul Mar!)  
 Dark Eyes  
 Du, Du Liegst Mir im Herzen  
 Emperor Waltz  
 Frère Jacques  
 Havah Nagilah  
 Hopak  
 In the Gloaming  
 John Peel  
 Juanita  
 My Old Kentucky Home  
 O Sole Mio  
 Santa Lucia  
 Wait for the Wagon  
 Wearing of the Green

**Happy Birthday America LPM 415**

EZ Play Music. Hal Leonard Publishing  
 Corp.

America  
 America the Beautiful  
 American Patrol  
 Battle Cry of Freedom  
 Battle Hymn of the Republic  
 Caisson Song  
 Dixie  
 God Bless America  
 Home on the Range  
 Marine Hymn  
 Star Spangled Banner  
 Stars and Stripes Forever

This Is a Great Country  
This Is My Country  
This Land Is Your Land  
Washington Post March  
When Johnny Comes Marching Home  
    Again  
Yankee Doodle Dandy  
Yellow Rose of Texas  
You're a Grand Old Flag

**Singalong Standards      LPM 406**  
EZ Play Music. Hal Leonard Publishing Corp.

After the Ball  
Bill Bailey, Won't You Please Come Home  
A Bird in a Gilded Cage  
Comin' through the Rye  
Give My Regards to Broadway  
Ida  
In My Merry Oldsmobile  
In the Good Old Summertime  
In the Shade of the Old Apple Tree  
Little Brown Jug  
Mary's a Grand Old Name  
Meet Me in St. Louis, Louis  
My Wild Irish Rose  
Oh My Darling Clementine  
Oh! Susanna  
Sidewalks of New York  
Silver Threads among the Gold  
Sweet Adeline  
Sweet Rosie O'Grady  
Tom Dooley  
Wait 'Til the Sun Shines, Nellie

## Recordings

### Cassettes

**Choral Arranging      CBM 703**

by Hawley Ades  
Shawnee Press

Textbook designed for the director, student or composer. Covers principles of part writing for voices, with chapters on different combinations of voices. Each chapter gives suggestions for further study; the appendix includes a bibliography of supplementary examples. Available only from NLS/BPH, Music Section.

**Learning to Play Recorder, Soprano and Tenor      CBM 640**

by Jean Sell

In two levels, each consisting of eight tapes. Appropriate for people of all ages with and without previous musical experience. Folksongs, familiar tunes, and composed music especially appropriate for the recorder are played as solos, in duets, and with guitar accompaniment. Emphasizes playing by ear and covers fundamentals of music. Includes suggestions for choosing and caring for instruments. Available only from NLS/BPH, Music Section.

## Discs

### For Singers Only

by Phil Moore

In four discs, each with six songs. Each song is presented first as a vocal demonstration with combo backing and then for rehearsal with combo backing alone.



me 1: Great Ballads—It Had to Be  
Please Be Kind, You Go to My Head,  
aceable You, As Time Goes By, I  
r the Waterfront.

me 2: The Mood Is Blue—Am I Blue,  
We Be Friends, I Got a Right to Sing  
lues, Birth of the Blues, When Your  
r Has Gone, Can't We Talk It over.

me 3: With a Beat—Please Don't

Talk About Me When I'm Gone, Dancing  
on the Ceiling, But Not For Me, Jeepers  
Creepers, September in the Rain, Mountain  
Greenery.

Volume 4: Swingin' Easy—Do, Do, Do,  
If I Could Be with You One Hour Tonight,  
You Took Advantage of Me, Anything  
Goes, I've Got a Crush on You, Let's Do  
It.

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# The Musical Mainstream

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the Blind and  
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# The Musical Mainstream

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**Vol. 5, No. 2**

The *Musical Mainstream* contains several types of information. "Selected Reprints" is comprised of articles reprinted from national music and news periodicals. The "Features" section carries updated information about the National Library Service music program and original articles of interest to the blind and physically handicapped. Additions to the NLS music collection are listed under "New Music Materials."

Eligible blind and physically handicapped persons may order free subscriptions to the large-print, braille, or cassette versions of the *Musical Mainstream* from their cooperating libraries or from the Music Section, National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped, Library of Congress, Washington, DC 20542.

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# Announcements

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## National Endowment for the Arts Information Available on Tape

Application forms and descriptions of music programs funded by the National Endowment for the Arts will be taped upon individual request to the Music Section. For more information, please call, using the toll-free number, 800/424-8567.

## Music Article Guide Service Improved

Music Section is now able to provide prompt service (three to four weeks) for article requests selected from the *Music Article Guide*. Please write to the Music Section, National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped, Washington, D.C. 20542 or call using the toll-free number, 800/424-8567.

# Selected Reprints

## A Conversation with Aaron Copland on his 80th Birthday

by Leo Smit

*Contemporary Keyboard*

November 1980

More than forty years ago, Aaron Copland, then a popular young composer from what one critic characterized as "the mainstream of the avant-garde," expressed interest in meeting Charles Ives, the reclusive New Englander whose musical reputation had not yet leaked from artistic circles to the general public. A mutual friend, Nicolas Slonimsky, relayed Copland's request for a meeting to Ives at his isolated farmhouse in Connecticut, where the older composer mulled it over for a few moments and then asked Slonimsky the only question he ever asked anybody about Copland: "Is he a good man?"

---

Leo Smit studied piano with Isabelle Vengerova at the Curtis Institute of Music, and composition with Nicolas Nabokov. He made his debut as a pianist at Carnegie Hall in 1939, and has performed extensively since then. Among his compositions are an opera, *The Alchemy of Love*, a ballet, *Virginia Sampler*, a piano concerto, and a number of solo piano pieces. An authority on Copland and his works as well as a personal friend of the composer since 1943, Smit recently recorded *Aaron Copland: The Complete Music for Solo Piano* [Columbia, M2 35901] © 1980 by *Contemporary Keyboard*. All rights reserved. Used with permission.

Unfortunately, these two artists never met, although Ives did send his admirer a collection of songs, seven of which Copland performed at the piano, accompanying baritone Hubert Linscott in public recital. They had, Ives might have seen that Copland was in fact a good man, but much more as well. Even then, like Ives, Copland was a giant; indeed, they are recognized today as the two pillars upholding what has become the American school of orchestral music.

The world that Ives and Copland knew back then is no more; the spirits that guided their creative visions have retired, but the echoes of that world are preserved, by Ives in Lincoln: *The Great Commoner*, *Three Places in New England*, and *General William Booth Enters Into Heaven*, and by Copland in *Appalachian Spring*, *Billy the Kid*, and *Fanfare For The Common Man*. Between them, from the beginning of the century to recent years, they carved out a distinctly national musical vocabulary in these and other large-scale works as American as Wagner is German or Debussy is French.

But neither man stopped there. Both made major contributions to the piano repertoire, and as David Burge notes, the younger man's works, though not numerous, transcended a number of stylistic barriers. In fact, they can be considered milestones that mark the changing directions of his style over the years. For example, his youthful search for an escape from the shadows of the European tradition that has always blanketed the American musical scene is manifested in his use of jazz rhythms in various piano works, from his

3 *Moods (Equisses)* to his final word on the subject, the *Piano Concerto*, which premiered with Serge Koussevitzky conducting the Boston Symphony in 1927. The mixture of jazz and classical elements made a powerful elixir in those days, even so the composer was already forging restlessly down new pathways. As noted in his book *The New Music, 1900–1960* [W.W. Norton], “This proved to be the last of my ‘experiments’ with polyphonic jazz. With the *Concerto* I felt I had done all I could with the idiom, considering its limited emotional scope. True, it was an easy way to be American in musical terms, but all American music could not possibly be confined to two dominant jazz styles: the blues and the snappy number.” Once again, we can look to Copland’s previous works to forecast his next move. His *Piano Variations* (1930) betray the influence of Igor Stravinsky, whose objectivist style was affecting art throughout the decade. But they are not merely shades of Stravinsky. In their severe treatment of the idiom, their percussive use of the piano, their lingering American flavor, they shadow the impact of Bartók and Stravinsky as well as Copland’s further extensions of indigenous folk themes. But above all, they illustrate his skill at weighing, balancing, and blending a diversity of musical ideas to come up with a final product.

The importance of the *Variations* cannot be overestimated, not only within the context of Copland’s works but within the flow of twentieth-century music. Some of his other pieces have attained greater popularity, but the English composer and

musicologist Wilfrid Mellers could nonetheless justifiably refer to the *Variations* as “the key work in his career.” Writing in a special Winter 1970–71 issue of *Tempo* magazine commemorating Copland’s seventieth birthday, Mellers noted that the textures of this piece “are hard and uncompromising as a machine. The phrases and rhythms, derived in part from the ‘loneliness’ of the Negro big-city blues and of the declamations of the Jewish cantor, are fragmentary and skeletal; yet out of their Cubist reintegration Copland achieved music not only of a certain steely grandeur, but at times of an unexpected tenderness and warmth.”

The composer himself sees the significance of his *Variations*. “When I look back now,” he told Edward T. Cone in *Perspectives On American Composers* [W.W. Norton], “it seems to me that the *Piano Variations* was the start of my interest in serial writing.” This analytical side of Copland, which became evident in subsequent serialistic works like the *Short Symphony* (1933) and *Statements* (1934), would eventually blend with the more familiar facets of his style in the *Piano Fantasy* (1957).

Copland drew from other wells of inspiration throughout his career as well, the stomping cowboy rhythms in the last movement of his *Piano Sonata* (1939–41) and the Cuban dance flavor of his two-piano piece *Danzón Cubano* (1942) being just two examples. But his musical interests have also extended beyond composition itself. With Roger Sessions he sponsored a series of concerts from 1928 to 1931, in which works by other young American



composers were presented. In the same vein, Copland helped found the Yaddo festival of American music at Saratoga Springs, New York. As a believer in insuring publishing rights for those in his profession, he played a crucial role in organizing the American Composers' Alliance, in addition to serving as its first president, and has been active in the League of Composers. He has also served as president of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences and of the MacDowell Colony, a 400-acre retreat in New Hampshire for artists and musicians. And to top all this off, he has spent more than half a century conducting and teaching before orchestras and classrooms throughout the world.

Few in his boyhood Brooklyn neighborhood would have predicted that young Aaron, born on November 14, 1900, would enjoy such renown. The son of Lithuanian Jewish immigrants, he showed some talent as a child by writing a song at the age of nine, but no other evidence of his overwhelming gifts followed over the next few years. He was introduced to the piano by his older sister, began taking private lessons at 13, started dreaming of becoming a composer at 15, and took his first harmony instruction through a correspondence course. Copland was 17 when he resumed his efforts at composing, but even then he showed only a mild promise; it wasn't until he wrote a piece titled *As It Fell Upon A Day*, after having begun studies in France with Nadia Boulanger, that his true potential became apparent.

From the beginning, like many young-

sters of great ability, Copland was an artistic rebel. His first theory teacher, Rubin Goldmark, discouraged him from finding inspiration among the new modernist composers, which naturally impelled Aaron to seek out their work more diligently. Small wonder that Walter Damrosch, immediately after conducting the premiere of Copland's *Symphony for Organ and Orchestra* in New York 55 years ago, turned to his stunned audience and announced, "If a young man at the age of 23 can write a symphony like that, in five years he will be ready to commit murder."

Since then, of course, Copland has proven that in addition to being a good man—and not being a murderer, he is equally adept at writing dissonant challenging music and lighter, or more traditional material. By way of illustration, one can turn again to his *Piano Fantasy*. In his book *What To Listen For In Music* [McGraw-Hill], Copland outlined the difference between past and present techniques of composition for piano: Chopin, Schumann, Liszt, and later on Debussy, Ravel, and Scriabin, "took full cognizance of the fact that the piano is, on one side of its nature, a collection of sympathetically vibrating strings, producing a sensuous and velvety or brilliant and brittle conglomeration of tones." But in the twentieth century, he pointed out, the concept of the "nonvibrating piano" came into existence, "in which little or no use is made of the pedal. . . . The feeling of the modern composer for harsh, percussive tonal effects found a valuable outlet in this new use of the piano, turning it into a kind of large xylophone. Copland's *Fantasy*, with its serialist stru-



and its long pedalled tones utilizing the  
ities of the instrument, demonstrates  
he is able to draw from both ap-  
ches of piano composition.

ere are other clues in his writings that  
insights into Copland's attitudes to-  
the piano. What exactly is his view of  
instrument, and what hints can young  
sts find from the composer on how to  
lop an interpretation of his great  
s? A particularly enlightening passage  
e found in a letter he sent to the  
w of William Kapell, the brilliant  
g artist whose career was cut short in  
plane crash in 1953. Copland's note is  
duced in *Copland on Music* [Norton  
Da Capo]:

What was most surprising [about  
ll's performances of Copland piano  
c] was his fondness for the most for-  
ng aspects of my music; he repeatedly  
d precisely those pieces that his audi-  
s were least likely to fathom. He  
d them with a verve and grandeur and  
rity that only a front-rank pianist is  
to bring to unfamiliar music. He  
d them, I often felt, in a spirit of de-  
e: defiance of managers with their  
ous notions of what was right and fit-  
or a Kapell program; defiance of the  
nce that had come to hear him in  
s from the regular repertoire; played  
, one might almost say, in defiance of  
wn best interests. In actuality I believe  
ayed them in order to satisfy a deep  
—the need every artist has to make  
ection with the music of his own

ron Copland has retired from compos-  
though he still makes appearances as

a conductor, and he lives in New York's  
Hudson River Valley. Recently he was vis-  
ited there by Leo Smit, a composer and  
pianist himself who is also known as an  
authority on Copland's life and music. The  
two men are close friends; one of Copland's  
*Four Piano Blues* is dedicated to Smit. But  
in this particular visit Smit, with tape rec-  
order in hand, presented himself as a spe-  
cial correspondent for *Contemporary  
Keyboard* as well.

This was how the stage was set shortly  
before Copland's eightieth birthday, as  
these longtime acquaintances sat down to  
review the career of one of the most re-  
markable composers of the modern age.

\* \* \*

**Aaron, I'd like to ask you about the ear-  
liest memories of music you might have  
had as a child.**

I suppose if we confine that to so-called  
"classical music," my first musical  
memories are associated with my oldest  
brother Ralph playing the violin, accom-  
panied by my sister Laurine playing the  
piano. I used to hang around the piano  
while they were playing together. That was  
especially true when my sister was practic-  
ing her scales. She'd say to me, "Aaron,  
why are you hanging around here? Why  
don't you go out and play with the other  
kids?"

**What kind of playing did you do with  
the local kids?**

I was just out in the street where they  
were. I was never very good with the bat in  
baseball. I always had a suspicion that the  
pitcher was aiming at me instead of the

plate. My main idea was to stay out of the way of that ball.

### **How old were you at the time?**

Since I was was playing with other kids I might have been eight, ten, maybe twelve. It was before I had taken piano lessons, anyhow. Something in the music was fascinating me, though I couldn't have told you what it was.

### **Do you recall what they were playing?**

My sister was probably playing a Chopin nocturne and together they would have been playing a Mozart violin sonata or something like that. Nothing too heavy. He actually played quite nicely. Mendelssohn's *Concerto* was his big number, and my sister accompanied him, up to a point, as well as she could. We had a Steinway upright that my parents bought for her—I was the youngest of five, so it was the older kids who got the attention in that field.

### **And did she study the piano seriously with a teacher?**

Oh yes, she studied, and she played fairly well. My first lessons were with her, but after a couple of lessons she said, "Oh, you have to get a real teacher. I cannot teach you anymore."

### **Who was your first teacher?**

Gosh, that's really something. I can't remember the name of my actual first teacher. The first name I do remember is Leopold Wolfson; by the time I started studying with him I must have been fourteen or somewhere around then. Wolfson was a big shot. You know why? Because he came from Manhattan, you see. He only spent one day in Brooklyn each week, and he taught at a place called Pouch Mansion on Clinton Avenue. He knew his stuff. He

was a very *routinier* kind of man: Chopin was the high-light of his life, and Stravinsky was a madman. That was normal from his standpoint. But my real musical studies began with my need to find a harmony teacher. I forget who recommended him—I believe it was Wolfson—but anyhow it turned out to be Rubin Goldmark. Many years later he was the first teacher of composition named to the faculty of the Juilliard School, so he was a man of considerable reputation.

### **Do you recall any of the pieces you practiced in those days?**

Oh, it was just the regular repertoire: Mozart sonatas, Chopin ballades. Well, maybe that's a little too ambitious. I take that back. Let's say Chopin waltzes instead.

### **Did you enjoy practicing?**

The word "enjoy" doesn't ring any bells! Scales were a bore, and anything that was too hard just seemed to remain too hard. I never had any ambitions as a concert pianist. I did enjoy improvising at the piano.

### **How would you make the transition from prescribed lessons to improvisation? Would it come out of something you were playing?**

No, I didn't connect it with anything I was playing. It came out of monkeying around on the piano, and finding myself picking out little tunes or harmonies. I can tell you exactly how old I was when that happened. Certainly nothing of any importance occurred musically before I was thirteen. I wasn't a child prodigy or anything like that.

### **When did you start jotting notes down?**

I'd be guessing if I told you, but I'd say  
 teen or fifteen, somewhere around  
 e.

**Have any of these jottings survived?**

Whatever I had I gave to the Library of  
 Congress. As a matter of fact, they just got  
 e new material sent by the heirs of  
 ia Boulanger [Copland's esteemed  
 position teacher during his years in  
 ce], things that I left with her in the  
 enties, early pieces, and that kind of  
 g. Her secretary had had them sent to  
 Library of Congress, so I got a letter  
 n the Library, thanking me for having  
 nged that, and they said, "There's a  
 e for string quartet here. Do you mind  
 e play it!" They wanted to give it to the  
 Arte Quartet or somebody. I said, "Of  
 se I mind!" It was probably an exercise  
 Boulanger that she held onto. I think I  
 uely remember what it must have been  
 . It was rather conventional.

**When was the first time you remember  
 hearing popular music or jazz?**

Oh dear, I can't even remember there  
 g a first time. It was just around, in the  
 You went to a wedding, they danced to  
 popular music of 1915. My sister, al-  
 gh I don't have any direct memories of  
 robably played some. I remember there  
 e popular songs on the piano at  
 e—they were all older than I was, you  
 so I was aware of that, but nothing that  
 startling.

**Were you taken to any concerts as a**

es, I was, but not until I was fifteen or  
 en. I don't remember going to a con-  
 at thirteen, for instance, but my mem-  
 might be playing tricks there. And if I

went, it would have been to something very  
 obvious, like a famous pianist playing Cho-  
 pin. I seem to think I heard Paderewski,  
 maybe because I've seen pictures of him  
 and can imagine what his concerts were  
 like. But of course everybody was very  
 Paderewski-conscious.

**Aaron, several months ago you started  
 to tell me a fascinating story about you  
 working in your father's store. Could  
 you go into that now?**

Well, on busy days like Saturday or just  
 before a holiday, all of the family was there  
 to be called on, since we lived on three  
 floors above the store. Our whole lives  
 centered not around the family affairs, as  
 would be normal, but around the affairs of  
 the store. What was happening downstairs  
 was what was continually discussed, the  
 problems, successes, and failures of various  
 kinds, rather than where Joe went today, or  
 where Ralph went yesterday. And there was  
 always trouble. Either the prices were too  
 high or too depressed, or somebody got  
 fired, or someone was caught stealing some  
 underwear. So on Saturdays, when business  
 was heavy, anybody that was around was  
 asked to lend a hand. We were always paid,  
 by the way. My father always paid us for  
 our work; he never expected us to work for  
 nothing.

**Excellent training.**

That was the beginning of my savings  
 account in the Brooklyn Savings Bank. It  
 was a rather special way of growing up,  
 partly because I was the youngest of five. I  
 was fussed over more, both by my older  
 brothers and sisters, and by the employees  
 in the store. There may have been a dozen  
 employees, and I, being the baby, naturally



got more than my share of attention. I don't know whether that had a good effect or a bad effect, but anyhow it gave me the elements of being a performer.

**What specifically were your responsibilities?**

The most important one was to sit up at the cash desk when the cashier went out for lunch and dinner. You see, the store stayed open from 9 am to 9 pm, and we had that system of carriers where you pulled a string and a small metal container went on a rail up to the cashier's desk. The cashier was very near the ceiling, high up, and she could see most of the store from her lair. The cash boxes used to arrive with a considerable bang right next to my ear. Then you'd open the box, make the change, and pull a chain to send the container down again to where it had started. That left a very vivid memory, especially the *bang*. I think it was good to give a kid of fourteen or fifteen the responsibility. I could have stolen money, but I never did. It was an expression of trust at an early age.

**What kind of merchandise was sold there?**

We were what was called in those days a dry goods store, in other words, a local Macy's, except for furniture and big heavy things that would take up too much room. There's a gas station now where the store used to be, a rather large one, but the house is still there. The last time I happened to drive by Washington Avenue, four or five years ago, it was still there.

**Was there a plaque on it?**

Didn't stop to see. I'd be amazed if there was.

**What did you read in those days?**

The book *Jean Christophe* comes to mind; that was Romain Rolland's idea of Beethoven's life. That had a special allure, of course, because it had to do with a composer. I began reading fairly early. I got my books out of the main branch of the Brooklyn Public Library, down near Borough Hall, especially as I grew older, seventeen or eighteen. I read more or less the sort of thing a boy growing up in Brooklyn would read, although I think I read more than kids of that age normally do. Not so much novels. I always liked to read biographies, to see how people got famous.

**Did you have any heroes back then?**

No one immediately jumps to mind, except perhaps Walt Whitman. I remember that by the time I was seventeen Scriabin was a big musical interest. You see, it was very difficult to get his music. During the First World War no music was being imported from Russia, so anything I got out of the library by Scriabin would be of great interest.

**Aaron, did you attend high school in Brooklyn?**

Yes, Boy's High. Graduated in 1918. Then there was this momentous decision to make, whether I should go to college like my oldest brother, or whether I should spend all my time on music. I was so anxious to stay with music that I decided to give up college. That was sort of a blow to my father, but he accepted it since I seem so determined about it. I think it was the right thing to have done. College would have wasted a lot of time, for me at any rate.

**Definitely the right thing. In 1918 you**



**the *Night Song* to a text by Aaron  
fer. Who was he?**

He was a good friend who later became a professor of French at the University of Wisconsin. He was my first intellectual friend, we met at the Hotel Fairmont in the Adirondack mountains.

**A year earlier you wrote a piece in a  
lissy style, called *Melancholy*, to a  
n by Jeffrey Farnol.**

He was a famous novelist of that period, I don't remember how I laid my hands on this poem.

**Now, Aaron, when you were in  
ce in the early twenties, did you by  
chance hear pianists such as Ricardo  
s?**

I studied piano with Riccardo Viñes! I was anxious to find somebody who could give me the "mod-ern" repertoire instead of Beethoven; I'd already had that in New York. I think Boulanger encouraged me to do that too. And Viñes was giving concerts in which he played modern Spanish music, Albeniz, Debussy, and, I think, some Scriabin; anything it was in what we considered the modern repertoire. I can't say I learned much from him. He was rather a simple man, especially for a Spaniard. He was possibly slightly bored with giving lessons. However, we did go through a fair amount of modern repertoire.

**What were your studies with him**

For maybe a year and a half I took lessons at his studio, which was just an apartment with a piano in it. I don't remember anything special about it. In fact, I don't remember a single remark he made

to me about my playing, about music, or anything. I seem to remember his showing me different examples of how you should play this or that at the piano.

**What other pianists or composers  
did you meet in Paris?**

I met Prokofiev. He played in a dashing manner, all over the piano all at once. He seemed to have twenty fingers, not just ten. Very self-assured. I met him later on at Koussevitzky's house in Paris, and I remember one incident with him. I was going to play part of my early ballet *Grohg* for Koussevitzky to try to make an impression on him as a composer. To my distress Prokofiev was standing right behind me, while I wanted to do my selling job alone. By golly, when I finished playing, before anybody could say anything, he blurted out, "Too many *bassi ostinati*!" I could have killed him! He was ruining my act. And the worst of it was that he was right, of course. There were too many *bassi ostinati*. He had found me out. Isn't it funny how a thing like that will stick in your mind? Prokofiev loved playing the role of the bad boy, saying the wrong thing and ha-ha-ing about it afterwards. He was quite tall, you know, I always remember that he symbolized for me that rare bird, the tall composer. Most composers have been shrimps, you know: Beethoven, Brahms, Mozart.

**Did you ever hear Poulenc play?**

Yes, I did. He used to come to Mademoiselle's for five o'clock teas on Wednesdays. To me those teas were very exciting. After all, you came to Nadia's studio and what did she have on her

piano? Stravinsky's latest score before it was published. Those Wednesday afternoons began with a kind of class meeting of all her students. You wouldn't call it a lesson. We'd read over something new that had just been left with her by Roussel or Milhaud or whoever was writing in Paris in those days. It would still be in manuscript, and you had to make up your mind whether you liked it or not. It was challenging, and after this reading of new things at the piano tea was served, and the musical greats of Paris came. I shook hands with Stravinsky there. Albert Roussel came, Ravel came; I was just a boy from Brooklyn meeting all these names. It was just like harmony lessons with Nadia Boulanger; you felt that you were living in a very lively period in Paris, not only in music, but in all the arts. I was enormously lucky to have studied with her, and it took some doing to make up my mind to study composition with a lady! Can you think of any great composer in all the history of music who ever studied with a lady? I felt like a pioneer.

**You had already composed *The Cat And The Mouse* and found a publisher in Paris at that time, hadn't you?**

Yes. I didn't know anyone in Paris when I left for there, but I solved the problem of how not to be lonely by deciding to go to the Fountainebleau School of Music, which is a two-month summer school for American students. At the end of the two months there is a concert of the pupils' music, which is repeated a couple of days later in Paris. At that concert was M. Jacques Durand, who was

the head of the Durand & Cie publishing firm. I played *The Cat And The Mouse*, which was about two years old. After the concert M. Durand came up to me and said, "Is that work published?" I said no, and he said, "Well, I'd like you to come visit me in my office. We may be interested." Well, imagine how I felt. Not only was he a publisher in Paris, but he was the publisher of Ravel and Debussy. That made him tops in my mind. When I visited him, he said he'd like to publish the piece. I said I was very pleased, and he shoved over to me fifty dollars in French francs. "Sign this," he said, and I signed. I would have given to him for nothing, I was so excited about being published by Durand; that was the big thing. That was the dumbest thing I ever did. That piece is still selling quite well, and I haven't made a penny on it in fifty years. Harold Clurman says that was my one business mistake.

**Well, you still have a good batting average, Aaron. Was that the first time *The Cat And The Mouse* was ever played in public?**

It may have been, but I have a vague memory of playing it at one of my piano teacher's student recitals in Wanamaker's auditorium, which was free to the public with customers at Wanamaker's department store wandering in and out. Wolfson thought that it was wildly modern.

**In composing *The Cat And The Mouse*, did you have a program in mind?**

No. Well, there's a climax to the piece when the cat obviously catches the po-

mouse, and there's a little funeral march at the end. But other than that, it's just a piece that jumps around a lot. I certainly didn't decide that I was going to write a piece and call it *The Cat And The Mouse*, and then look for something that sounded like a cat and a mouse. No, the musical ideas suggested the title.

**The subtitle is *Scherzo Humoristique*. What must have been what you had in mind.**

Yes.

**Aaron, your *Piano Variations* is dedicated to Gerald Sykes. Can you tell me something about him?**

Well, Gerald was a friend of mine, along with Harold Clurman. We were sort of a trio at that time, and he knew all my dreams of the period. He wasn't in music himself. He didn't play the piano. He was a writer, and later he wrote and published books.

**Another literary figure commissioned another major work of yours, the *Piano Sonata*. That was Clifford Odets.**

Yes. I knew Clifford Odets through Harold Clurman because he was a member of the Group Theatre as an actor and a playwright, so he was very present in our minds in the twenties and thirties. He was a big music enthusiast. I forgot that he paid me, but it certainly was worth a dedication.

**Did he ever tell you how he felt about the music?**

I don't remember any specific remarks he made. I don't think he went in too much for the contemporary idiom. He was a great lover of the classics, in the

usual way.

**And then we come to the *Four Piano Blues*, which you dedicated "To the four pianists who've done the most for my music." I remember that quote because I was in it. The four pianists in order of the pieces are myself, Andor Foldes, William Kapell, and John Kirkpatrick. Could you tell me a little bit about your connection these other artists?**

I didn't have a very close connection with Foldes. He was around, of course, and he played contemporary music more than most concert pianists of the period. Other than that we weren't personal friends; we were colleagues in the field of music. Kapell was a famous pianist, and he was enthusiastic about some of my music. He played my piano works, so we were very aware of each other. We weren't really personal friends; we were musical friends.

**He played your *Piano Sonata* at one of his New York recitals, and then you received the commission from Juilliard to write the *Piano Fantasy* in his memory.**

Yes. Then there's John Kirkpatrick, an old friend. I forget where I originally met John. I think it was through Boulanger. He studied with her a little later than I did, and we may have overlapped in my last year there in 1924. He also was one of the rare pianists who was interested in playing contemporary music, so we were naturally pleased to have him.

**He made a slam-bang arrangement of your jazz *Concerto* for two pianos, which I played with various students**



from time to time.

I was afraid you were going to say, "With you."

Well, that is possible, if not desirable. Aaron, which of your own piano works have you performed, in addition to *The Cat And The Mouse*?

It seems to me that at one time I was able to play the *Piano Variations*.

You also performed the *Piano Sonata* in Chile, upon its completion in 1941.

You're right, I did. Boy, where'd you hide that little statistic? I haven't thought of that in years. It was during my State Department tour.

I think Lenny, Leonard Bernstein, performed it for the first time, in New York, and I gave it a second performance shortly thereafter.

Thank you very much.

You're quite welcome. My pleasure. As a matter of fact, that's the work that brought us together. I was spending a few months at St. John's College in Annapolis, Maryland, when I received a printed copy of the *Piano Sonata* from you with a very nice note saying, "Think you might be interested."

How intelligent of me. And you were.

I rushed into learning it, and when I thought I was ready I called you up and came over to your loft.

Was that the first time we met?

It was, yes. In 1943.

'53, '63, '73. . .

Don't add it up. Now you've also performed in a number of your chamber works. For instance, the *Vio-*

*lin And Piano Sonata*.

I did the *Piano Quartet*. The *Piano Trio* I could play at one time. Also the *Vitebsk* [*Study On A Jewish Theme For Violin, 'Cello, And Piano*]. And we recorded the *Danzón Cubano* for two pianos.

But you first performed it with Lenny at a League of Composers concert. I also remember a wild performance of the *Danzón* at your seventieth birthday party at the Essex House, when you and Lenny again played it before two hundred guests in a state of total relaxation. Have you also performed your *Flute And Piano Duos*?

Yes. That's not so difficult.

And the *Twelve Poems Of Emily Dickinson*?

Yes, I've done those too. I forget how I came upon her, but there's something American about Emily Dickinson. The sense of shyness, of course, there's that sense of shyness and the sense of brain that went with it. You wouldn't have imagined a shy person would have had that kind of a brain and remain shy. I once visited the house where she'd lived. You know the famous story of how she went upstairs and wouldn't come down for about fifty years? The family had to send her messengers up there to her? It seemed like such a very remarkable story. Well, I walked the stairs and looked out the window of that room, and you could actually see the main cross street of the little town of Amherst, Massachusetts, so she wasn't completely isolated. She could at least have an idea of whether it was five o'clock in the afternoon through whether



ffic increased or not. Somebody who  
ote about her said that when the whole  
nily was out, she did come down. How  
y knew that I can't figure out, but it  
ould seem likely. She had no reason to  
y up there; there was nobody watching  
if she came downstairs.

**Was there any particular way in  
which you chose the poems and the se-  
quence of the Dickinson songs?**

No, I wouldn't have known the order  
il I had written most of them. But the  
raction of poems for a composer is  
y curious. I have found that as far as I  
concerned, and I would imagine it  
rks more or less the same with many  
nposers, 'I'll read a poem and I'll  
nk, "This is good, it could really be  
to music, but I wouldn't want to do  
' And I'll read another poem on the  
lowing page and know immediately  
t I want to set it. There's some kind of  
athomable attraction that certain  
ems have, and that other poems, even  
hey're very good, don't. So each of  
poems I did set in the Dickinson  
elve was a kind of spontaneous reac-  
n to reading a lot of her poems. This  
s the major work I did for voice, and  
n later on I set about eight of them for  
ce with orchestra.

**What other poets moved you to set  
ir works?**

Not many. I wrote a thing called *Song*  
'927, based on e.e. cummings.

**You also set a poem by Geneviève  
ggard for soprano, flute, and  
rinet.**

That was *As It Fell Upon A Day*. In  
merry month of May. But the main

things were the Dickinson poems.

**In *The Beginning* has a Biblical text.  
Were you attracted to religious texts?**

Not especially. A thing like the tale of  
the beginning of the world, of course,  
would naturally seem challenging, if you  
want to put it to music.

**And a cappella too.**

A cappella of that.

**Aaron, I'd like to ask you some  
questions about your *Music For The  
Theatre*, which makes use of both jazz  
elements and of the piano in a very  
original way. What are your recollec-  
tions about working on that piece?**

Well, it was, I believe, a work re-  
quested by the League of Composers for a  
performance at a League concert, al-  
though I don't think it was commis-  
sioned. They had performed something  
else of mine—I can't remember anymore  
what it was—and as a result of that ear-  
lier performance they said, "Why don't  
you do a chamber orchestra work, as  
we're planning to give a chamber or-  
chestra concert?" I thought some of the  
pieces in the five movements had a rather  
theatrical flair, so I happened on the title  
*Music For The Theatre*. That irritated  
some people. I remember that they said,  
"What's the point of calling a piece  
*Music For The Theatre* when it wasn't  
written for the theatre?" Curiously  
enough, it was considered wildly modern  
when it was played in 1925. I got razzed  
in the press, and I remember my father  
was quite upset by that. He said, "After  
all, the *New York Times* pays these fel-  
lows for their opinions. They must know  
something about music." I said, "Oh,

pay no attention to them. They're all dodos anyway. They know about the classics, but they don't know about recent music."

**You once told me about [composer] Roy Harris' reaction to one of the movements.**

Yes, that's right. It was the jazzy movement. He was horrified. When I played it for him at the piano, he jumped up and shouted, "It's whorehouse music! It's whorehouse music!"

**Disapproving or approving?**

Well, I mean he was shocked! He said, "You wouldn't want to have it played at a serious concert!" I sang "yi-di-di-di-di-di-di" with my voice to emphasize the jazziness of it all.

**When you played your *Piano Concerto* with Koussevitzky and the Boston Symphony Orchestra, was it your first major performance at the piano?**

Far as I remember it was. I did play my *Passacaglia* and *The Cat And The Mouse* at a League of Composers concert—I think that was the first time I appeared as a pianist in my own music in New York—but the *Concerto* was the first time I had played with an orchestra. I couldn't have played a normal Chopin concerto. I didn't have enough technique.

**Well, I think you play your *Concerto* better than anyone in the world.**

Hand made.

**Aaron, you told me an interesting story about the first time you heard an orchestra play something you wrote. Was it the *Symphony For Organ And Orchestra*? You had come back to the States from Paris, and you were notified about**

**the first rehearsal.**

That's right, yes. Naturally I was keen to hear what my orchestration sounded like. On the way from Brooklyn to the Aeolian Hall in Manhattan, where the rehearsal was taking place, there was some kind of slowdown on the subway. I don't know why, but you know how the subways in New York just stop all of a sudden sometimes in the middle of a tunnel. Nothing happens, nobody tells you anything. Time was passing, and I had visions of that orchestra getting together and playing my music without me being there! Well, we got moving, and finally when I arrived at 42nd Street I ran the two blocks to Aeolian Hall—you remember it was between Fifth and Sixth Avenues—and as I got near the hall, while still running, I suddenly thought, "If I go in the front entrance I won't have to go an extra block to get to the stage entrance." I wasn't sure if it would be open, but I took the chance, dashed to the front entrance, yanked open the door, and got a blast of my own orchestration, *fortissimo*, plus organ, for the first time in my life, and I'll never forget it. It was one of the most exciting moments of my life. It sounded so much more *glorious* than I had ever imagined it would [laughs].

**Had you ever played an organ?**

I never touched an organ. Never thought about it. Nadia was an organist as well as a pianist, and since she had been invited by Walter Damrosch to come to America and be organ soloist with his orchestra, she was brave enough to ask me to write her an organ concerto. I thought

it was very wild of her, since I had never heard a note of my own orchestra and I knew nothing about the organ. And this was going to be my debut in New York, as well as hers! When she suggested it I asked her, "Do you really think I can do it?" She said, "You can do it!" She had this way of pointing her finger and saying, "You can do it," and it ended the conversation. So I went home to Brooklyn and did it.

**Did you do any boning up or research on the organ?**

No. Didn't have any organ around to do any research on. Didn't occur to me to ask anybody to let me try their organ [laughs].

**She had an organ in her apartment. Did she ever play it for you?**

Yes, she did, but not very often. It was modest in size. The apartment was a small-sized apartment. She kept writing letters, though, which I probably have in my place here on file, or maybe I gave them to the Library of Congress: "Please send me something. Time is getting short. Send me at least a movement so I can get some idea what it's going to be like." I was trying to compose it while holding down a job as a hotel pianist in Pennsylvania.

**Where was this?**

I've forgotten the name of the town. You see, I came home from France in the summer, with nothing to do in July or August. I didn't want to ask my parents for money; I was 24 years old already, and they had retired from business and were living quietly, so it seemed very inappropriate. A friend of mine was a violinist by

the name of Sidney Roof, and he said, "I've accepted a job for a trio in a hotel. Do you want to be the pianist?" Well, I had nothing better to do, so I said okay. I had a piano outside the hotel to work on, and we had our trio.

**Did you attract a lot of listeners?**

Unfortunately, or maybe fortunately, business was lousy. It was the first year the proprietor was running this particular hotel. He had very few guests and practically nothing to do while we were playing lunch music and dinner music, except to hang over my shoulder and be critical of how odd the tempo was that I was taking in whatever stupid little piece we were playing. We had to put up with it because he was the boss.

**You had lot of free time to compose?**

Yes, I had quite a lot of free time. I used to work on the movie house piano during the mornings and afternoons; it wasn't in use, of course, except in the evenings.

**Aaron, I notice on the top shelf of your bookcase a number of photographs of people you've been close to, including one of Stravinsky that he inscribed to you on a certain occasion.**

**Do you remember what that was?**

That had to do with the playing of *Les Noces* [a Stravinsky ballet] on four pianos with three other composers. Roger Sessions was there, and I think Sam Barber and Lukas Foss. I remember being very nervous, worried about hitting all the right notes at the right time. But Stravinsky seemed pleased, as I remember it.

**Aaron, I'm intrigued by the kind of**



personal vocabulary that you've developed to instruct the pianist, in particular, as to the emotional, the sonorous qualities, of the sounds you hope he or she would succeed in achieving. I don't think any other composer has chosen the words you have.

Really? I would be interest to know what they would be.

Well, in the *Piano Fantasy* "bold and declamatory" and "clangorous" are typical. Then you have "caldo," one of the few Italian words other than legato or crescendo. "Restless," "hesitant," and "brooding" are other examples. One of my favorites is "muttering."

I can mutter at the piano.

It happens to be for music in the very low register, staccato and pianissimo, and that forces the pianist to find a new way of playing soft staccatos. Do you aim for a kind of harmonic structure which will influence the nature of the word you choose, or is it the other way around?

No, I would say it's the harmonic structure that influences the nature of the word. I wouldn't have a word and then look for a harmonic structure.

You also write, for instance, "crystalline," "delicate," "uncertain."

"Uncertain?" You don't see that often. In fact, you're always urged to be as certain as possible. You have to be very sure of your uncertainty or else you'll be very uncertain.

Then you have an expression, "not too precise."

What would an alternative expression

to that be?

"Unevenly?" But that's not exactly it either.

No. Does it refer to the rhythm?

Yes, at least as I've heard you play it. You do that part very well. If I may go on: "light and playful," "with mounting excitement," finally "furious," then "Hold back," with a capital H. Then we have "broader, not evenly" for the right-hand scales, which are already set out in groups of 5 and 7 and 9, but you don't want them to be divided rigidly. And then, in the recapitulation, "full and round tone." I remember you once used the expression "round tone" in describing the effect of Wagner's orchestration. Now here you have "slowly, with atmosphere." I've never seen that before.

Now what the devil does that mean? "Creating a spell," I suppose, would be another way of putting it. How do you play that passage?

I find that working the pedals in a certain way creates an overlapping, mingling, or blurring.

Yes, that makes for "atmosphere."

We're coming now to a novel piece of advice. You say, "each note very marked, both hands of equal intensity as they are pounding away in the extreme upper register of the piano. Then, "slowing up and trailing off to . . . no tone whatever." If you do it exactly right, the audience has the impression it hears the notes, although they are quite inaudible. All they see are your hands barely brushing the keys. The overall effect of these injun



is to create an aura of your physical presence, at least while I'm learning your music. In the process of studying I feel you're not only there on the page, but physically present, urging me to do this and that in a language which is traditional.

How long did it take you to learn the fantasy?

I remember learning it in about five days, my last feat of learning, in preparation for the first *West Coast* performance. William Masselos premiered in the East. Aaron, do you remember the first film score you ever wrote?

I think it was *Of Mice And Men* [1939]. I think *The City* [1939] was probably the first film I ever put to music, though.

What was a documentary about New York?

Yes. You couldn't hope to get a job in Hollywood to compose for a fiction film; you'd never written a note of film music, so it was valuable to have been hired to do this documentary.

Did you actually work in the studios when you were doing film music in Hollywood?

Yes, mostly at night. It was very interesting because at night the studio was like an armed medieval city. All the streets of the studio were darkly lit. You couldn't get in or out without going past a guard at the gate and explaining who you were and what you were doing there. Typically everybody had gone home, so there were no street noises, and it was very conducive to concentrating on what you wanted to do. I used to work maybe

from nine to midnight.

**Do you have a favorite film score?**

I think *The Heiress* [1949]. In the first place it won me an Oscar, so if they liked it, naturally I liked it too. But the subject of the film was serious, and I guess it brought out serious feelings in me. I enjoyed doing *The Red Pony* [1948] too. It was a touching story and it really needed music for certain sections.

**By the same token, would *Appalachian Spring* be one of your favorite orchestral scores? It won a Pulitzer Prize.**

Yes. I've conducted that a lot, maybe more than anything else of mine.

**Do you have a favorite neglected work?**

Hell yes! *The Short Symphony*! It's hard to put over. It's not impossible to play, but it's not easy either, and I haven't found that it's much of an audience piece. They can't seem to hang onto it, to grasp it. It doesn't make a big enough noise and it's not grandiose in any sense, but I keep playing it during my concerts here and there and will probably continue to do so.

**Are there any projects that were either abandoned or never realized, that you regret not having gone into or finished?**

I'm sure there were some, but no one work immediately jumps to mind. Of course there are forms. I'd love to have done a real grand opera, in the usual sense of grand. A string quartet might have been nice too, but other than that nothing really hits me.

**Wasn't it nice to have come across**

***Midsummer Nocturne* [a piano piece composed by Copland in 1947], after having forgotten completely about it?**

Very nice. I have to thank Phil Ramey [composer, pianist, and music journalist] for that.

**I have thanked him. Are there any other works likely to be uncovered that way?**

I can't imagine any. There's Boosey & Hawkes [publishers] sitting there, and me sitting here, with no reason why I wouldn't hand anything over to them.

**You're still conducting, traveling, and meeting students on college campuses as your eightieth birthday approaches.**

I sometimes wonder whether I'm tempting Fate by staying active so long. Why don't I get out of it while I'm in full control of my faculties? However, this is, of course, a special year, and what I'll do after November, I'm not really certain. I keep getting invited to conduct orches-

tras. I've got a book over there with my programs in it, so when I'm trying to make up new programs I can look at the old ones to see what I did.

**You've conducted your *Piano Concerto* with many different pianists. Is there a big spread in the approaches and styles you've heard?**

It's hard for me to reproduce them all in my mind and make comparisons. I suppose American pianists generally have an "in" as to the style it should be played in.

**Well, Aaron, you've been a doll.**

I've been a doll? You've been a doll! You continue to be a doll!

**I want to thank you for sharing your time and your thoughts. On behalf of myself and *Contemporary Keyboard*.**

You're making a speech, man!

**Well, instead I'll just say, happy birthday, dear Aaron, and many happy returns.**

Thank you, dear Leo.

## Ernest Bloch: Composer, Conductor, Educator

Joan Pursewell, *Clavier*  
September 1980

Ernest Bloch, whose centennial we celebrate this year, is unique in the field of music. Successfully combining the careers of composer, conductor, and teacher, he is especially known for his large orchestral works and for his influence on his celebrated students, among them Roger Sessions, Ernst Bacon, Bernard Rogers, Dall Thompson, Halsey Stevens, and Mark Kirchner. Not as recognized, however, are his roles as an outstanding teacher of children, as director of two outstanding music schools (the Cleveland Institute of Music and the San Francisco Conservatory of Music), and as the composer of a number of finely-crafted piano compositions for students. In this centennial year it is appropriate to examine his role as a teacher and to look at some of his piano writing pieces.

Born in Geneva in 1880, Bloch studied at the Hoch Conservatory in Frankfurt, in Munich, and in Paris where he studied solfège with Dalcroze and violin with the great Joseph Ysaÿe. In 1915 he accepted his first teaching position at the Geneva Conservatory.

Previously on the faculty of the University of Chicago, Joan Pursewell received her M.M. from the University of Iowa, and has performed with major symphonies and chamber groups. © 1980 by *Clavier*. All rights reserved. Used with permission.

tory and gave one hundred fifteen lectures on aesthetics. He came to America in 1916 as conductor on a tour with dancer Maud Allen and remained in the United States when he was offered a position at the Mannes School of Music. Here he began his career as an influential teacher. His daughter Suzanne recollects: "Our apartment was like a conservatory. Students, composers, chamber music playing. It was a stimulating atmosphere."

In 1920 he was appointed Director of the newly founded Cleveland Institute of Music, and he remained there until 1925. When the Institute opened in 1920 it enrolled seven students; by October, 1921 it had two hundred; and by 1922 it had four hundred. Bloch gathered a dedicated faculty willing to work long hours to get the new school on its feet and set an example by working harder and longer than anybody. Suzanne Bloch relates: "He would work from nine to five, six days a week, visited classes, conducted the student orchestra and chorus and gave master classes in composition." Somehow he also found time to compose. While in Cleveland he wrote many chamber music works and the majority of his solo piano music.

In 1925 he left the Institute for San Francisco, to head the recently founded Conservatory. He was a strong force in the development of the Conservatory and in the musical life of San Francisco, and he was honored to be recipient of a trust fund set up by the Stern family, prominent art patrons in the city. This fund guaranteed him with a yearly income for ten years (provided he devote himself to composition), and set up an endowed chair at the nearby



University of California at Berkeley (which he would occupy after 1940). After ten strenuous years of teaching and administration, he left the Conservatory in 1930 and went back to his native Switzerland for eight years. He returned to the United States in 1940, and taught at the University of California at Berkeley until 1952. Finally he retired to the seaside town of Agate Beach, Oregon, where he remained until his death in 1959.

Bloch's interest in teaching young people led him to publish several articles on pedagogy, which are of value to teachers today. He also wrote a weekly newsletter for the faculty and students at the Cleveland Institute, from which the following excerpt is taken:

### Advice From the Director

1. No one can practice for you, and your progress depends essentially on steady, regular work.
2. It is better to practice one hour a day, but every day, than to make a great spasmodic effort, and then relax.
3. Practice with your head as well as with your fingers. Fingers have to obey your will as you will have to lead them and not let them lead you. Before practicing think of what you want to do. It will save you time and energy.

Let me give you a tip. In order to do absolutely constructive work, you must have a single aim at a time, and persist until you have achieved it. Work in such

a way that each evening you can feel that you have accomplished some one thing that day.

He wholeheartedly believed in studying "musicianship," not merely instrumental technique, and his curriculum included much ear training, dictation, and creative work. It was important for the student to have a thorough basic training in order to develop the basic musical tools, and to learn how to use them.

### On beginning music study:

It is recommended to start *music* (italics mine) study as soon as possible and at least one year if not more before the study of any instrument. In certain cases, both may be started at the same time, but unfortunately 90 percent of music students have no knowledge of what is generally, and improperly, called theory, and what ought to be called musicianship. That is why people go for years practicing blindly (and deafly) without thinking of what they are doing. It is not possession of a garden and seeds that makes a man a gardener, but the knowledge of how and when to plant the seeds.

### On memorizing:

I insist on this point with all my strength, that teachers and students do not let themselves be seduced by the purely amateurish show of playing without the notes, which artistically mean nothing, and that they remember that memorizing may be a result, but music must never be an aim.



It is impossible for a student to perform works of a composer—Bach, for example—in the proper way if he has not a knowledge of the spiritual life and deals of the composer, where he stands in history, how his style was prepared by his forerunners and how he developed. If you do not know these things and care only for the technique of your instrument there are many chances that a player of piano will do as well, or better, since it does not make mistakes.

### Piano Compositions

The piano compositions written for students are notable for their musicality. Although geared to the technical capabilities of the less advanced performer, they make concessions to musical taste, and as such pieces are as effective today as they were fifty years ago. The pieces are generally impressionistic and programmatic, make full use of the piano's sonority pedal. As a result they are exciting for a young pianist to play. With the exception of the *Sonata* (a later and quite difficult work) all the solo piano pieces are playable by intermediate to early advanced students. The most successful of the solo pieces are *Poems of the Sea*, *Five Sketches in Sepia*, and *Enfantines*. *Poems of the Sea* takes its inspiration from verses of Walt Whitman; and the titles and content of the individual movements, *Waves*, *Chanty*, *At Sea*, evoke pictorial images. The themes and harmonies are typically Bloch, with a folksy, folk-song atmosphere. Most difficult is the last movement in a rolling 6, 8 measure rhythm.

*Five Sketches in Sepia* is not as overtly

pictorial but is rather more impressionistic, hence more of a challenge musically. The five movements, with French titles, are each characterized by short melodic fragments made interesting through changing meters and rhythmic shifts. The *Epilogue* uses a cyclic form, drawing upon themes from the four preceding movements.

*Enfantines*, a set of ten pieces, is written for elementary students and is sheer delight to play and teach. Each piece represents a moment in a child's experience: "The Joyous Party," "With Mother," "Rainy Day" are several of the titles. While all the pieces are basically lyrical and melodic and can teach the student much about phrasing and tone control, each one focuses on a particular rhythmic or technical problem. For example, "Joyous March" is concerned with changing meters; "Melody" with left hand melody lines; and "Rainy Day" with repeated notes and slurs. Each piece is accompanied by a charming drawing by Bloch's daughter, Lucienne, and dedicated to various friends and associates in Cleveland. In *Enfantines* Bloch has been able to see the world through the eyes of a child, and this set of pieces certainly ranks with the classic sets of children's pieces, such as the Tchaikovsky and Schumann *Album for the Young*.

"Joyous March," emphasizes three technical problems: rhythm, articulation, and chord playing. In alternating meter (C, 3, 4), the piece is based on a two-bar rhythmic figure spread over seven beats, notated as a common time measure followed by a 3, 4 bar. This rhythm quarter, 2 eighths, quarter, quarter accented; quarter 4 eighth is fundamental to the piece, and the

student should be able to beat or clap it before beginning to play the notes.

Another feature is the alternation of slurs and staccatos. Bloch's fingerings are extensive, and although the repeated note fingerings could be simplified, the fingerings for the slurred notes are ideal for producing the desired effect. The third problem consists of chord playing. There is a great deal of three- and four-part writing and the teacher must direct the student in placement and shifting of the chords.

The two most difficult passages are bars 30-35 and bars 42-48. The chords in bars 30-35 will need to be practiced slowly and firmly to sound all the notes. Especially tricky in bars 42-48 will be coordinating the left hand two-note slurs with the staccato thirds in the right hand. Again, slow practice will help.

Finally, the success of the piece depends on attention to detail. The rhythm is strict, and the seven-beat phrases give an off-beat quality to the sound. The one point at which two common-time measures appear in succession (bars 48-49) provides a delightful surprise. Otherwise there is no rubato, and the performer has a real challenge in making the piece interesting by emphasizing dynamics and register changes.

Teachers and students alike can learn much from examining the articles and music of Ernest Bloch. The ideals and values that he set forth fifty years ago can be an inspiration to us today.

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*Musical America*, May 21, 1921, p. 2

*The Musician*, April 1923, p. 28

*The Musician*, April, 1924, p. 29.

## Solo Piano Music of Ernest Bloch

**Enfantines** (1923) Carl Fischer  
**BRM 20215**

**Five Sketches in Sepia** (1925) G. Schirmer  
**BRM 9505**

**Poems of the Sea** (1922) G. Schirmer  
**Waves BRM 11592, 11595, 11598,**  
**11601, 11604, 12380, 12381, 1238**  
**12383, 12766**

**Chanty BRM 11590, 11593, 11596,**  
**11599, 11602, 12766**

**At Sea BRM 11591, 11594, 11597,**  
**11600, 11603, 12766**

## Why America Spurns American Conductors

Roger W. Williams  
*Saturday Review*  
 October 1980

October 1958, Leonard Bernstein was named music director of the New York Philharmonic. He was the first American-born, American-trained musician to attain such an important position, and his appointment raised the hopes of the country's orchestral conductors. No longer, they believed, would the most prestigious American conductorships automatically go to Europeans and other foreigners; Americans were at last ready to take over leadership of their own orchestras.

That was twenty-two years ago, and the hopes have not been fulfilled. Since Bernstein, only one American, Lorin Maazel, has led one of our world-class orchestras. Perhaps worse, Americans still do not preponderate in the two dozen other orchestras of national stature. They are still being ignored or pushed aside in favor of Europeans—more recently—Asians and Latin Americans. In fact, statistics demonstrate that American conductors have lost ground in recent years—during a general boom in demand for American arts and arts institutions. In the August/September issue of *Symphony Magazine*, columnist Ralph

Black noted that Americans in 1975–76 occupied the podiums of fifteen of the nation's thirty-one major orchestras and twenty-one of its twenty-eight regional orchestras; by 1979–80, the American presence had dropped to thirteen and twenty, respectively.

Statistics alone do not indicate the extent of the exclusionary trend. Both the National and American symphony orchestras are under the direction of foreigners: the National by the Russian emigré Mstislav Rostropovich and the American by Sergiu Comissiona, a Rumanian. In addition to the National, at least six major symphonies (Philadelphia, Denver, Minnesota, Cincinnati, San Diego, and Utah) have recently chosen new music directors, and not one of them has been an American. The most recent was San Diego, which selected David Atherton of Great Britain; though, according to San Diego general manager William Denton, a "considerable number" of Americans were considered for the position.

In talking about conductors, the term "American" is admittedly tricky and open to various interpretations. Citizenship is not a reliable test, because many conductors became naturalized citizens late in their careers, often after establishing their reputations elsewhere. For the purpose of evaluating the progress of Americans in this field, the term should apply only to those artists who were born, bred, or trained in the United States.

While the un-American American symphony has been talked about for years, the controversy has become heated in recent months. At the American Symphony Or-

by Roger W. Williams, a freelance writer based in New York City, writes often on arts. © 1980 by *Saturday Review*. Reprinted with permission. All rights reserved.



chestra League's annual meeting in June, Bernstein himself urged greater acceptance of the American conductor. "He is out there," Bernstein declared, "in quantity and quality, gifted, brilliant, catholic in taste, and spoiling for action."

Others prominent on the classical scene agree. Aaron Copland calls the preference for foreign conductors "a hangover from the past, when we didn't have competent people of our own. Now, however, it's just lazy thinking and an unwillingness to look around." Gian Carol Menotti says: "While I find nationalism in the arts extremely distasteful in principle. . . I am very often astonished by the lack of courage and imagination of many orchestras. They prefer to hire a tired, mediocre, routine European conductor, rather than take an exciting chance with one of the many brilliant young conductors who are rising stars on the American horizon."

Composer William Schuman, who also addressed the Orchestra League meeting, told his audience bluntly, "We do not ask any special consideration for our American conductors, except that they not be discriminated against in their own country. And the evidence that they are is inescapable." In a recent interview, Schuman added, "It's a kind of reverse chauvinism—against our conductors and composers." The works of American composers, he and many of his colleagues feel, would be played far more often if Americans were in charge of program selection. (The current music director of the Los Angeles Philharmonic, the Italian Carlo Maria Giulini, for example, is known for his aversion to American music.)

A strong dissenting view comes from Ronald Wilford, the president of Columbia Artists, who manages twenty-three American conductors, including James Conlon, Sarah Caldwell, and Michael Tilson Thomas. Wilford says flatly that aside from Bernstein and the Metropolitan Opera's James Levine, who are assumed not to want the jobs, no American can meet the high standards of our orchestral Big Six: the philharmonics of New York and Los Angeles and the symphonies of Boston, Cleveland, Philadelphia, and Chicago. "I know," Wilford asserts, "I've given so many Americans chances, and they've failed." Noting that Maazel is leaving Cleveland in two years to accept the musical directorship of the Vienna State Opera, Wilford concludes, "An orchestra of Cleveland's stature has to have a conductor who can enable it to maintain its attractiveness as a high-paid touring ensemble. At this point, the available Americans just can't fill that need."

Are there really no Americans with the requisite ability and experience? One thinks immediately of Thomas, who has followed several years in Buffalo with a highly successful freelance career; Conlon, who, at thirty, has conducted virtually every major orchestra in the United States and Canada; André Previn of the Pittsburgh Symphony; former director of the London Philharmonic; Leonard Slatkin of the St. Louis Symphony; and Dennis Russell Davies, who raised the little-known St. Paul Chamber Orchestra to international stature before accepting the musical directorship of the Stuttgart Opera.



Davies represents a classic case of America's under-utilized native talent. Despite his record at St. Paul, he had no accepting American job offers before accepting the Stuttgart position (he takes over there in the fall). American conductors of his rank, Davies says, are in an "impossible" situation in the United States: "Discrimination is probably too strong a word to describe the situation. It's more a lack of sophistication and courage on the part of those who make the decisions. Some of them are woefully behind in their think-

ing. Symphony boards, in particular, fail to recognize the tremendous strides that have been made by American orchestras, conductors, and training institutions. American music schools now draw students from throughout the world (recent years have seen an especially heavy influx from the Continent), and the United States has more orchestras, as well as more great orchestras than any of the countries whose musical heritage it owes the trustees of our symphonies. From his post in self-imposed exile, Davies lays the responsibility for perpetuating the old patterns on America's major orchestras. "The mid-level orchestras all emulate the big boys," he says. "Until they start hiring Americans there won't be much change down the line."

Others believe that movement will have proceeded in the opposite direction, that is, moving within the ranks of the major orchestras below the level of the Big Six. Even while the situation certainly would be improved if, say, Cleveland replaced Maazel with another American, "native" appointments in a handful of Utahs or Minnesotas

would help even more. After all, Bernstein's appointment to, and success with, the New York Philharmonic did little to break the log jam further down. Even if Ronald Wilford is correct that Americans simply aren't ready to take over our world-class orchestras, they are ready for the orchestras next in line—what baseball calls the high minor leagues. Why should the most promising Americans have to go to Europe for on-the-job training they ought to be getting right here?

This is not to belittle the value of cross-cultural fertilization. There should always be some Americans conducting orchestras abroad and some foreigners conducting our own. But Americans should not be forced to travel abroad because of lack of job opportunities at home; nor should foreigners be automatically sought by middle- and lower-echelon ensembles in the United States. "Look at what you find," says Charles Ansbacher, chairman of the Conductors' Guild. "A Mexican in Oklahoma City, a Pole in Corpus Christi, a Greek at Eastern Connecticut, a Britisher on Cape Cod. That kind of thing is what discourages our conductors."

It is doubly discouraging when, as frequently happens, the foreigner has succeeded an American. Recently, Cincinnati replaced the late, esteemed Thomas Schippers (and his interim successor, American Walter Susskind) with Michael Gielen, an Austrian hardly known in the United States. Utah hired Lebanese-bred Varujan Kojian when illness forced the veteran Maurice Abravanel to step down; every other one of the dozen conductors initially considered by Utah was American, but few of them even

got a chance to audition. The board, fearful of losing Kojian, grabbed him quickly.

If there is a future for the American conductor, then, it should flourish in these high minor leagues. They should be hiring people, young or middleaged, of either proven ability or unusual promise. Among a spate of candidates mentioned by knowledgeable musicians are: Larry Foster, former Houston music director who works mostly in Europe; Henry Lewis who brought the New Jersey Symphony to national attention and now freelances widely; Michael Palmer, who spent ten years as associate conductor in Atlanta and is beginning his fourth season in Wichita; and such talented younger men as David Gilbert, Michael Zarott, Roger Nierenberg, Thomas Bricetti, Julius Heggi, and James Paul.

Lewis, who will be forty-eight this month, stands as something of a symbol of an American conductor's frustrations. He has conducted major symphony orchestras, here and abroad, for almost a quarter-century, and has gained a certain eminence within the profession; as he puts it, "I've been on this board and that board, on NEA panels, and conducted, on a guest basis, a lot of important orchestras. Yet somehow I've remained outside the door"—that is, the door leading to a prestigious permanent appointment. Like many others interviewed, Lewis stoutly maintains that the quality—in talent and preparedness—of American conductors is seriously undervalued by the symphony trustees who could hire them and, indeed, by their own managers. "If anyone is less accomplished, it's many of the Europeans, including some of those who are getting the directorships of

American orchestras. There are cases of hiring people here who are unknown even in their own countries."

Music directors are chosen by symphony boards composed heavily of nonprofessionals. Boards have always tended to choose their members from among people with, Tanglewood artistic director Gunther Schuller puts it, "wealth, power, and a vague love of music as a 'social grace.'" Their primary qualification is that they can contribute substantial sums of their own and tap acquaintances for others. In the standard selection process, a trustee committee sees out prospective candidates, then presents a list to the full board. Ideally, the process includes consultations with knowledgeable outsiders as well as guest conducting appearances by the candidates in serious concert. In this regard, Cincinnati's recent choice of Gielen, drew a good deal of fire. The choice, Schuller has written, "was made by two or three trustees after seeing Gielen at only one concert—and that with the Detroit Symphony." The result: the selection of a music director "totally unknown to the orchestra, most of the trustees, and the Cincinnati public."

This layman's hammerlock on symphony boards is gradually being broken. Representatives of the orchestra now sit on many symphony boards and participate in the decision-making. In Cleveland, orchestra members actually outnumber trustees, six to five, on the twelve-person committee searching for Maazel's replacement.

Dilettantism among board members is only one reason for the chronic underrepresentation of Americans at the helms

merican orchestras. Another, perhaps more compelling, is the stubborn cultural superiority complex with which most Americans are still affected. True enough, the symphonic repertoire is basically European, as are the conductors and instrumentalists who have made it a staple of international culture. But since World War II, there has been a tremendous growth of indigenous American musical talent. "The trustees' perception has lagged far behind the fact," says Charles Ansbacher, "not only where conductors are concerned but also musical music in general. Europe has gone down, and America has gone way up." This European preference includes an unmistakably snobbish element. There are board members who savor the sound of accented English, a conductorial kiss of the hand, and a list of European cities on a candidate's resumé. Says William Denton: "The name Leipzig Gewandhaus sounds terrific, and the name Des Moines Philharmonic doesn't, although the orchestras may be comparable."

Nowadays, the snobbery is often broadly based. Unimportant symphonies want to be thought of as important; small cities, as metropolitan. Attracting a music director to Strasbourg or Seoul is an obvious way to promote these images.

Inevitably, the need to raise money plays an important role in trustee thinking. A symphony orchestra is a sizable business, beset by inflation. Trustees are increasingly dependent on show-biz techniques to sell tickets and attract benefactors. Famous, big-name conductors, extensive publicity, media hype, and recording contracts are prerequisites if an orchestra is to be

considered important. The competition to sign up with a big label is fierce, and in the American market, having a foreign conductor is deemed a merchandising asset.

"Boards need to raise more money, sell more seats, and build bigger halls," says Francis Thorne, executive director of the American Composer's Alliance. "That requires a public following and, increasingly, an element of show biz." Mstislav Rostropovich, a top-ranked cellist, was made music director of the National Symphony substantially for show-biz reasons. Though Rostropovich had limited conducting experience, he had political chic and a stagey personality. Rostropovich is credited with upgrading the quality of the National's guest conductors, and he has gotten the orchestra its first big recording contract. But privately as well as publicly he has received scathing critical notices.

"Hiring Rostropovich was a matter of box-office economics and cultural one-upmanship," says an American conductor familiar with the negotiations. "Everybody was excited about what a catch he was; nobody paid attention to what kind of music director he'd be. Since then, I've heard directly from members of the orchestra that they're badly disillusioned and sick of having a conductor who's long on personality and short on musical substance." William Denton, general manager of the National when it chose Rostropovich, acknowledges that the desire to make a big splash played a part in the organization's thinking: "We knew that kind of announcement would receive vast international attention."

What should American conductors



do—or what can be done for them—to overcome the persistent discrimination they suffer? Some hotheads have demanded that outside funding sources, such as the NEA, adopt a system of quotas for symphonies that accept government or corporate largesse. That would strike most of us as artistically and ethically repugnant. Henry Lewis's pragmatic advice to young conductors is to go to Europe—"I'm having to do that again, for the third time"—and to tend strictly to the business of building one's competence and setting one's goals, "regardless of what the professional managers and symphony trustees are doing to you." Certainly programs of independent assistance can help. The National Endowment of the Arts, in conjunction with Exxon, is funding a widely applauded program that places, and pays for, apprentice conductors with American orchestras. By placing its apprentices with major American orchestras, the NEA/Exxon program is giving them the kind of showcase, as well

as experience, that can lead to public acceptance and important jobs.

Over the long term, the American conductor's future may be bright. Michael Tison Thomas even predicts that American with their transcultural opportunities and outlook, will be uniquely qualified to meet "the real challenge ahead: the development of original interpreters of the classical repertoire." For the present, however, the challenge is not to develop original interpreters but to secure jobs and build reputations in America's high minor leagues. A month after month, as the orchestras that play in those leagues fill top vacancies, it becomes all too obvious that the present challenge is not being met. "Look at the orchestra in Toledo, my hometown," says Dennis Russell Davies. "It just went through a big search for a music director and hired an Israeli. He's probably very good. But if an American can't make it that level, where can he make it?"



## Instrumental Classes of Yesterday

James A. Keene  
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### Conservatory System

The conservatory system of teaching was borrowed from Europe. In many instances, the European conservatories were sponsored by governments for the purpose of preserving that country's musical culture. Ordinarily, they were open for all, their directors realizing that musical talent was no respecter of social class. In general, the curriculum consisted of applied music, solfeggio, harmony, and other theoretical branches. Their aim was to produce excellent performers with broad musical backgrounds. The most imitated of European conservatories by their American counterparts was the Leipzig Conservatory, an institution started by Mendelssohn in 1843. Many German musicians who emigrated there found their way to the United States as immigrants and later became music teachers, and many American students who looked toward the continent for the completion of their musical education went to the conservatory at Leipzig. That school adopted class teaching as its principal system of instruction, believing that a condition which allowed for

the students to play for each other and for the criticism of the teacher was most desirable. In general, the students in each class were all at the same level. At Leipzig there were five distinct classes, but more were organized when necessary.

American conservatories had a somewhat different philosophy, a not too surprising idea considering the cultural level of the United States during the nineteenth century. The American conservatory was aimed at all people in the hope of generating a cultural renaissance among the masses. It is a tribute to our American idealism that our cultural efforts have always attempted to include our entire population—though the more rarefied our cultural ambitions, the less success we have had with our egalitarian efforts.

The Leipzig Conservatory was particularly conservative. In 1857 its director would consider no music since Mendelssohn to be worthy of study or performance. Performances of Chopin and Schumann were rare, and the music of Wagner was not only unplayed, but the composer was not mentioned as a musician! In general this conservative attitude was transmitted to the American conservatories, which can account in part for the American predilection for the music of the past.

While there have been several claims as to who first introduced the conservatory system to America, Eben Tourjée must be recognized as the first person whose results were significant and permanent. He was born in Warwick, Rhode Island, in 1834. In 1851 he began a business as a music dealer, taught music in the public schools, and formed classes in piano, voice, and organ. Although still at a tender age, he began publishing *The*

Keene is Chairman of the Music Department at Mansfield State College in Pennsylvania. ©1980 by *The American Music Teacher*. All rights reserved. Used by permission.

*Key Note* which later became *The Massachusetts Music Journal*. In those publications Tourjée first expressed his desire for an American Conservatory of Music.

In 1853 Tourjée tried to interest some Boston educators and musical persons in his plans, but they considered him an impractical dreamer. He then began a school of his own at Fall River, Rhode Island. At the Fall River Conservatory classes were offered in piano, voice, violin, and flute at a cost of one dollar for twenty lessons. To the founder's credit, a total of 560 pupils were enrolled, but from the beginning his expenses exceeded his income. Tourjée was forced to abandon the venture after two years. He moved to Newport in 1855, where he taught music in the public schools and where he, undaunted, began the Newport Musical Institute. After a three-year stint as director of the Seminary in East Greenwich, Rhode Island, he went to Europe to study the textbooks and methods of the conservatories there. While he remained only a year, he found time to make the acquaintance and perhaps to study with Schumann, Cramer, von Bülow, Richter, and August Haupt. Upon returning to America, he moved to Providence, where he promptly founded the Providence Conservatory of Music. His efforts now met with success, and only six years later, in 1867, Tourjée established the New England Conservatory of Music.

He became one of the principal spokesmen for the class system of instruction, a system which worked well when it was introduced in Boston. An indefatigable promoter, he organized and trained choruses of ten and twenty thousand for Gilmore's famous peace jubilee of 1869 and 1872. He received a

doctor of music degree from Wesleyan University in 1872, and the next year was made dean of the College of Music of Boston University.

A call, along with that of Theodore Presser and others, to the nation's music teachers to the *National Music Conference* for the purpose of developing a uniformity approach to music education represented the first organized meeting of music teachers on a national scale. The organization became the Music Teachers' National Association, which was organized in 1876 with Eben Tourjée as its first president.

Americans believed that there were too many large classes in the European conservatories, and so modified the European practice. Instrumental classes in this country varied between two and six students. The Boston Conservatory advertised four students to a class; New England advertised six; Peabody, four to six; Oberlin, two or three; Chicago, three; Cincinnati, three.

Children's instruction was also given at the New England Conservatory. The 1881-82 Catalogue announced the lessons as one per week, either privately or in class, at a fee of fifty cents and upward.

But many music professors rebelled against the conservatory system of class instruction; the advent of the degree programs in music signaled the decline of this type of class instruction. The class method was continued for the study of secondary instruments in conservatories and colleges; but for the study of a student's primary instrument, the vehicle of private instruction was resumed. The conservatory system also declined with the growing popularity of class instruction.

in instrumental music in the public schools.

## Instrumental Music in the Public Schools

There were considerable differences in approach toward the teaching of instruments in classes. The Conservatory system had small classes in which the students played individually. The public-school instrumental classes were larger, up to sixteen, or even as high as thirty. The students played together. The conservatories used method books most often from their European counterparts; the public school classes used books especially prepared for them, in addition to some conservatory methods. Public-school class instruction became a stay of instrumental teaching, while conservatory professors were, for the most part, happy to return to the concept of individual lessons.

The conservatory concept of class lessons was foreign to the public-school teacher; and when instrumental instruction began to work its way into the public-school music curriculum, there developed a felt need for some means to teach orchestral instruments to school children in an efficient and economical way. But the nineteenth century was not ready to introduce instrumental music into American schools. The introduction of vocal music was problematical enough for a citizenry barely able to accept the concept of public education and, by the middle of the next century, with a tight curriculum based upon the tenets of faciology. So the isolated practices of class teaching did not find a fertile soil in the national landscape.

But in England in 1898 there was an

event that was destined to help change the course of school music teaching. The Murdock Company, dealers in musical instruments, began violin classes in the All Saints School at Maidstone, England, as an experiment in developing a love for orchestra music. Instruments, music, equipment, the organization, and the teachers were supplied by the Murdock Company of London. The classes were held under the supervision of the school, and payments were arranged in small weekly amounts, so the poorer children could afford lessons. During the first few years of its existence, almost a half million violins were sold by the Murdock Company in some five thousand schools. Charles Farnsworth heard a concert at Alexander's Palace that involved one thousand four hundred fifty instrumentalists from school orchestras in and about London. Massed performances were presented periodically to provide an outlet for the students, to promote the program, and presumably to stimulate additional business for the Murdock Company.

The First Annual Festival of the National Union of School Orchestras in 1905 featured seven hundred students. The number increased each year until there were over six thousand participants at the Tenth Annual Festival in 1914. That year the event was divided into two sections; three thousand five hundred played in the afternoon, and three thousand three hundred in the evening. The masses of violinists played to the accompaniment of a brass band! The First World War brought these activities to a sudden stop in England, but the idea was carried to the United States by Albert Mitchell, Paul Stoeving, and Charles Farnsworth.



The three wrote, taught, and lectured on the techniques they observed in England; were responsible for the promotion of this kind of class instrumental instruction in the United States. Albert Mitchell, a music supervisor in the Boston schools, was given leave in 1910 to go to England for the purpose of studying the class-teaching methods used in England. He was sufficiently impressed that when he arrived back in this country, he immediately set out to organize violin classes in Boston. Mitchell held these classes after school with sixteen children per class. Three years later the results of his efforts were sufficiently impressive that his classes were admitted into the school day. He claimed Boston as being the first city in the United States to introduce systematic violin-class teaching into the public schools. In 1918 he published a method for use with his classes.

In addition to Mitchell who taught the classes, and Farnsworth who wrote the publicity, Paul Stoeving had much to do with the promotion of string class teach-

ing in this country. Stoeving was a concert violinist, wrote books, and taught classes. He was educated at the Leipzig Conservatory and toured as a concert violinist until 1896. At that time he accepted an appointment as professor of violin at the Guildhall School of Music, London. He observed the Maidstone Movement, as it was called, and was deeply impressed. He came to the United States to live in 1914 and that year reported his ideas and opinions to the MTNA Convention at Pittsburgh. He described the Tenth Annual "National Festival" to those assembled. His writings concerning the efficacy and procedures to be used in teaching string instruments in class are still as pertinent today as when they were written.

For an excellent study of class instruction see Charles Edmond Sollinger, *Teachers, Musical Men and the Professors—a History of String Class Methods in the U.S. 1800-1911* (Doctoral Dissertation, The University of Michigan, 1970).



## American Recordings: Endangered Species?

Christopher Greenleaf

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The classical recording business has never had the enormous profits sometimes enjoyed by other segments of the recording industry. Occasional losses and periods of unprofitability have averaged out. Earnings have remained at a stable, generally sufficient level. (One wag in the thirties said that the “high brow” recording companies had been dying for so long they had developed *vigour mortis*.)

Recently, an unusual amount of comment has appeared regarding the health of the domestic music-making and recording. The point of unanimity is concern for the American classical record as the most tenuous and available link to our musical heritage.

American ensembles are already recorded more for European firms than for our domestic labels. A frequently-quoted “starting cost” of recording a symphonic LP in London is \$15,000, exclusive of production and distribution. In the United States, this basic figure is generally \$10,000 to \$45,000.

The American Federation of Musicians has recently stated that only 45 minutes of music can be issued out of each three-hour ses-

sion. This decree effectively limits usable material to one quarter of the potential tapes. The intent of this decision is to affect the movie industry’s dealings with hired ensembles, not classical music. Nevertheless, the question arises: Does the income made from recordings offset the loss of jobs such provisions cause?

Many people are shocked by the extent to which European firms issue records financed by state-supported radio groups, symphonies, and opera houses, or by the artists themselves. Yet America is learning that our own orchestras and ensembles must have substantial support of outside backers and governmental subsidies to make recordings.

Today, it appears that the only way recordings of orchestras can fit inside rational budgets is for them to be made outside of this country. This aspect of classical records labels’ dilemma is enormously frustrating (and debilitating) to our professional musicians.

Classical recording firms frequently operate as small, autonomous divisions of larger parent corporations. When that parent becomes financially troubled, the generally marginal profits of the classical divisions become unacceptable. And whatever its ideals or moral purpose, a label must justify itself financially to survive, whether it is a small division within a larger company or a wholly independent entity—and it must survive to do its job properly.

There are many cases in which firings and cutbacks landed on the apprehensive staff members of beleaguered classical divisions in the fall of 1979, most visibly in the wholesale changes at Nonesuch, the most

Christopher Greenleaf is a New York-based music reviewer. ©1980 by *Virtuoso*. All rights reserved. Used with permission.

popular label among the so-called budget record firms.

Fifteen years back, Jac Holzmans, head of Elektra, created a classical division. He saw an unusual marketing concept and seized on it as a viable way to release a flood of good music at a competitive price. Nonesuch began by issuing European records, for the most part, under license from their originating labels. Gradually, the small firm had such success marketing its informative, well-recorded, and freshly inspired discs that it began recording and issuing its own.

For fourteen of the label's fifteen years, a professional musician and producer headed the small organization inside the Elektra family. Teresa Sterne, whom nobody in memory has called anything but "Tracey," guided Nonesuch and its unique repertory through the sixties and seventies, garnering praise from critics and retailers for the civilized and consistent quality of the twenty-five or so releases that appeared each year.

Midway in the story, Elektra/Asylum/Nonesuch became part of Warner Communications, the largest entertainment combine on the globe. The Nonesuch acquisition promised the immense resources and broad distribution that even a successful small label needed.

Tracey Sterne used outside recording engineers and a top-notch independent mastering firm. The result of her insistence on doing things *her* way earned her the plaudits of record reviewers and a snowballing number of customers, but presumably created tension with the parent company, whose experience and aims fre-

quently conflicted with those of an exclusively classical label.

A key to the Nonesuch phenomenon is the caliber of the artists and repertory associated with the label. Many successful and familiar figures in music were first heard in Nonesuch's clean, spacious recordings. William Bolcom, Joan Morris Joshua Rifkin, Jan DeGaetani, Gilbert Kalish, the Boston Camerata, Paul Jacobson, and the Contemporary Chamber Ensemble made their first great impacts on Nonesuch.

The artists themselves often provided liner notes, offering information on the music, its place in history, the editions used, the instruments played.

The repertory, though, is the real star of Nonesuch's broad skies. One could make a strong case that the label started the whole Baroque revival, after interesting but inconclusive beginnings by other labels. Schoenberg, Joplin and new American music are other beneficiaries of Nonesuch's pioneering and rather daring adventures in repertory exploration.

The point is, Nonesuch was always "in the office," as they say. Although classical records seldom sell even half a million copies, still, the small company, in its splendid if shaky isolation from Elektra, made money.

Recently, sales were down at Nonesuch. One source avers increasing rarification of the Nonesuch catalogue. Another source forcefully blames the listless national economy. A record retailer in a high-volume classical record store flatly states that "after time he placed orders but received neither confirmation nor records. Yet another says he received an alarming

er of faulty pressings from exasperated customers and was unable to obtain the cements he ordered.

the beginning of December, Elektra fired Tracey Sterne and her staff that were no longer with Nonesuch as of May 1, 1980. The new director of the label is Keith Holzmann, brother of founder and previously unassociated with a classical label.

the hue and cry that ensued, though restraint generally prevailed, some especially sharp and angry words appeared in newspapers and magazines known for mild stands on any matter with a whiff of controversy in it. After deploring Ms. Sterne's dismissal, most commentators offered a clear and factual evaluation of Nonesuch's track record.

These discussions, the Pulitzer-Prize-winning works originally commissioned by Nonesuch and the service to American music figured alongside the label's rigorous musical standards. Elektra's spectacular losses and expenses in the rock market next to the corporation's estimate of a \$200,000 deficit in 1979 for Nonesuch, along with some speculation on reasons for this deficit vis-a-vis reports of Warner's pressing and shipping snafus. The most commonly stated opinion was that the loss of Sterne and staff has effectively minimized the label.

James Goodfriend, enlightened Music Editor of *Stereo Review*, points out that every idea of a nationally distributed label is enough to evoke a vision of a organization equipped to handle every whim, every project, and every communication from the outside world. Don't

you believe it. A classical record company is a half-dozen people, overworked and underpaid."

Even the oldest and most established of the "majors" are essentially small record companies operating under the umbrellas of corporations that may not even be primarily concerned with records. People used to thinking about a label as "RCA Red Seal" or "CBS Masterworks" are usually rather surprised when they learn how few people actually comprise their staff.

In many cases, as with Nonesuch, a single person becomes the embodiment of the company. The late Goddard Lieberson was Masterworks. Alan Silver is Connoisseur Society. At Vox/Turnabout/Candide, the figure of George Mendelssohn is accepted as the personification of the company, despite its recent absorption into the Moss Group. RCA Red Seal was once synonymous with George Marek. Talk of names like Lyricord, Desmar, HNH, MHS, and DRI, and the conversation will involve personalities and labels interchangeably.

In recent firings at various classical labels, music-world figures and artistic directors have generally been replaced by financially-oriented executives. While no one can reasonably assert that accountants and marketing directors must not play an active role in the directions taken by the labels, it will be a sad day if the grand old names in the classics are succeeded by whiz-kids uninvolved in American musical life.

The first losers will be the artists. An out-of-print artist is often an out-of-work artist. The repertoire a musician performs is



often determined by what is familiar or acceptable to the public, as defined by recordings which are currently available.

In new music (and for new artists) this is especially true. Records prepare the public and other musicians for concert presentation of new works.

The longer shelf-life (saleability over long periods) is one of the hallmarks of classical records. It is also one of the guarantees we have of the diversity of our musical culture.

Classical records will have to become more expensive to support the companies and artists that make them. Alan Silver, head of Connoisseur Society's small but seaworthy operation, says record companies have been guilty of selling their albums too cheaply for too long. They have failed to assure their business obligation to survive.

There is a simple and practical truth in this. The phonograph record is no longer a luxury item. In classical music, it is the book, the repeatable concert, a sound document, and a tangible link with current musical life. Without it, our concert life loses its momentum. Lacking it, our artists lose touch with their audiences.

This discussion has avoided talk of the mergers and acquisitions affecting London-Decca (bought almost a year ago by Polygram, which owns DG and Philips), EMI (joined with Thorn Electrical Industries) and various others. It has also completely skipped the various ways in which classical (as opposed to other) records are marketed and sold. This all involves a fairly

complex tale of jobbers, wholesalers, allowances, mail-order catalogues like MHS and Louisville, non-profit distributors of Louisville and CRI, and the mechanics of classical warehousing.

Space simply doesn't allow contemplation of this crucial aspect of the industry. . . one not at all removed from the musical and ethical considerations on which this article has dwelt.

America's musicians are too good and too world-renowned not to be recorded. Our domestic labels should be healthy enough to record them and keep them in print and to make available repertory that the world-wide combines must ignore because of its "local" American nature.

The death of any key record company would mean the demise of a portion of the music world. Nobody likes price hikes but the alternative is no product to buy.

Alan Silver estimates that a minute of music in 78 RPM days cost about a quarter cent. Today, it averages out at between ten and fifteen cents per minute. Inflation and thirty years of soaring costs may be making this ten to fifteen cents cheap to the point of unhealthiness.

What the classical labels are going to need—more than restructuring, a review of repertory and choice of artists, and marketing tactics—is a healthy infusion of cash."

We will end up paying more for our music—but wouldn't you rather pay for it than mourn it?



## Braille Music Forum: Expression Markings in Print and Braille

Nettie Krolick

Expressions may be said to represent that of music which cannot be indicated by . . . It includes all the nuances of tempo, dynamics, phrasing, accent, touch, bowing, etc., by which the mere combination and succession of pitch-time-values is transformed into a living organism." (Willis, *Harvard Dictionary of Music* [Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1958], p. 250)

The topics addressed in this article are: what changes occur when indications of musical expression are transcribed into braille, and how do these changes hinder the blind performer in preparing a musically-accurate transcription of a "living organism"? To answer these questions we will examine the treatment of musical expressions in braille, compare the treatment of expression markings in braille with their placement in print music, and discuss the potential effect their placement may have on performance.

Musical expressions are indicated in many ways: by words or phrases, e.g., *allegro*, *legato*, *dolce*; abbreviations e.g., *rit.*, *mf*; and signs or symbols, staccato and other touch indications, bowing and phrasing, crescendo and diminuendo. Each of these—words and phrases, abbreviations, and signs or symbols—is transcribed differently in braille, with some markings being changed more than others when they are transcribed from the print.

Let us examine the three categories of markings in turn.

### Words or phrases

Words and phrases are an integral part of music notation. The most familiar usage of words and phrases is mood or tempo indications such as *allegro moderato* given before the music begins. These words are written above the notes in both braille and print, and thus, present no unique problems for braille readers.

Literary information or directions occurring during a piece or movement are easy to spot in print, because letters do not even faintly resemble notes; in braille, literary material is easy to find, providing a signal indicates the change from music to the literary code.

Until 1956 this signal was the word sign (dots 3-4-5) which preceded anything written in the literary code. Since 1956, the word sign has been used only before abbreviations; complete words or groups of words are enclosed in literary parentheses and separated from music braille by spaces before and after the literary material. When words occur in the middle of measures, the music hyphen (dot 5) follows the last braille music character before the space, so the reader knows that the space is not a bar line. Reuss method transcriptions show both the historical word sign and the modern parentheses (in that order) after the space.

Many pre-1956 transcriptions in which readers will find no spaces before literary material are still in circulation. The signal for code changes in this music is the word sign before single words or before either

the first or each word of phrases such as *poco a poco stringendo*. When a single word sign precedes a phrase, spaces separate the individual words of the phrase.

In print, words and phrases are written above or below the staff; in braille they are shown on a separate line above the music or are inserted into the line of music. In braille keyboard music, words found in the right hand part usually apply to both hands; words in the left hand part probably apply only to that hand. However, words in the right hand part may apply only to the right hand, so a careful examination of the musical possibilities is always necessary. Generally, though, the meaning and effect of words and phrases can be understood equally well by braille and print readers.

### Abbreviations

The second category of expression markings are those written as abbreviations, e.g., *p*, *f*, *mf*. In braille the expression markings in this category are always preceded by the word sign (dots 3-4-5) to signal the change to the literary code. The period following an abbreviation is written as dot 3, which with an octave sign signals a return to the music code.

Until 1954, abbreviations such as *mf*, *pp*, *sf*, etc., were not followed by dot 3, because no period is used in print. Their omission created braille reading problems when the next sign was not an octave sign. I have often read “psh” and then realized the literary, dynamic sign *p* was followed by a sharp sign. At the 1954 Paris Conference it was decided that these letters must be followed by dot 3 when the next music sign contained dots on the left-hand side of

the cell. This practice facilitates reading clearly signalling the change back to music braille.

Before comparing this category of expressions in print and braille, it is necessary to review the general characteristics of music notation. Most braille readers understand that print music is written on a staff of five equidistant, parallel lines drawn horizontally across the page, but they may not be familiar with other details of print notation practices. Additional short lines (ledger lines) are added above and below the five lines of the staff as necessary to accommodate higher and lower pitches. The notes themselves consist of oval-shaped heads and, except for whole notes, they have stems extending either up or down from the note head. (The direction of the stem is usually immaterial.) The note heads show pitch by their location on lines or in spaces. The letter names of lines and spaces are determined by clef signs; e.g., the first (bottom) line of the staff is for the octave E if the music is “in the treble clef”; the same line is second octave C if it is “in the bass clef.” Values are indicated by the color of the note heads (whole notes are outlined, all other notes are filled in), stems attached to the note heads (whole notes are stemless, all others have a stem), short lines called flags attached to stems of certain notes, dots immediately following the note heads, and so on.

Notes played or sung together are aligned vertically on the staff, and, within a pair of stemmed notes having the same rhythmic value usually share a common stem. Thus a chord consisting of three quarter notes appears as three vertically aligned notes

is attached to a common vertical stem. In keyboard music written on two staves, vertical alignment extends through both staves. The upper staff has a common stem for beamed notes of the same rhythmic value; the same is true for notes of the same rhythmic value in the lower staff. When rhythmic values are different, the notes have individual stems but are still vertically aligned if they are to sound simultaneously at any given point within a measure. Stems, flags, etc., are used to differentiate between rhythmic values. Expression markings written as abbreviations are rarely written on the staff proper, but instead, are also aligned vertically and placed either above, below, or, in the case of keyboard music, between the staves. For a sighted person can see the two staves and surrounding space at a glance, this vertical presentation is quite practical. A sighted musician sees a section of the music with the dynamic or other expression markings as a whole, then, using his or her musical skills, adjusts balance between the parts, decides upon the degree of dynamic to be used, brings out the important voices in the measure, and so on. In braille transcriptions, where abbreviations are presented quite differently, the markings are interpolated at a specific place in a single line of braille which represents one part or one voice within a part. Expression markings are generally placed in the right-hand part of piano music and, often, before rather than after indicated signs. The performer should be aware that dynamics or other expressions usually apply to both hands and to all indicated parts. Some situations are easily un-

derstood, such as when a whole note is preceded by a *cr.* and followed by an in-accord part containing eighth notes. Obviously, the crescendo is executed during the eighth notes, not the whole note. In less obvious situations, the performer's musical sense must be the guide to degree, balance, and interpretation of abbreviations. For example, in print the abbreviation *rit.* usually appears above or below the music near the end of phrase. The letters themselves, which are written parallel to the notes, may take up as much space as two or three notes. The abbreviation is never inserted between two specific notes as is necessary in the braille transcription. Braille readers should not make the mistake of making a sudden *ritar-dando* at the exact point indicated in braille, but instead, should skillfully blend a *ritar-dando* into the musical phrase as they create a "living organism".

### Signs or Symbols

The third category of musical expressions consists of signs or symbols. The braille music code contains specific signs for phrasing, accent, touch, bowing, and so on, and these generally pose no reading problems. To the contrary, the fact that these signs are interpolated between the notes rather than being aligned vertically above or below the staff is a distinct advantage to beginning braille readers who are more likely than their sighted peers to notice the musical expressions and learn them as they learn the notes. I can, however, think of two examples where an understanding of print notation may be of benefit to braille readers. One is the placement of expression marks between the two hand parts in piano



music, and the other is the use of diverging and converging lines instead of words or abbreviations for crescendo and decrescendo.

In print piano music, particularly in chordal passages, accent, staccato, or other touch signs are usually written twice, once for each hand part. Occasionally, however, the sign is written only between the staves; this single sign is aligned with the vertical column of notes for both hands. The sighted reader plays the chords with the indicated expression in both hands and probably never notices the single marking. The braille reader, reading the hand parts on separate horizontal lines, finds the expression markings in only one hand. He or she is more likely to notice and puzzle about the omission than the sighted reader, but after studying the music, sees that the signs are intended for both hand parts. Again, good musical judgment is called for in interpreting expression and performance markings.

In braille, the letters *c* or *d* following a word sign do not represent *c* or *d* in print, but rather the beginning of diverging or converging lines that indicate crescendo or decrescendo, respectively. The lines resemble print V's lying on one side. For a crescendo, the V lies on its right side and the lines gradually spread apart; for a decrescendo, the V is on its left side and the lines gradually converge until they join. The set of lines (the V) is parallel to the notes involved—in some cases two or three, and in some cases many more. In fact, the V may extend almost across the print page.

In braille, the end of crescendo lines is shown with a word sign followed by a

lower-cell *c* (dots 2-5), and the end of decrescendo lines is shown with a word sign followed by a lower-cell *d* (dots 2-5-6). However, if another dynamic such as *f* or *p* follows the marking, the new dynamic is shown and the end of the lines is omitted. Braille readers should remember that the single letter *c* represents a print sign that extends to either the new dynamic marking or to the termination sign (a lower-cell *c*); the same applies to the single letter *d*.

In print, a space separates a crescendo mark followed by a decrescendo sign. The lines, which rarely touch, form a general guide for the eye. Some braille transcriptions show only the beginning of the crescendo, the beginning of the decrescendo, and the end of the decrescendo (ignoring the space between). Other transcriptions meticulously show the endings of all lines. In comparing many examples of print and braille music, I have found enough variation in practices to advise readers again to be aware of the general print notation, and then, using their own musical judgment, to interpret nuances flexibly, not starting or stopping crescendos on any note.

In summary, interesting differences exist between the placement of expression markings in print and braille music. These differences result from the process of weaving all elements of music into a single braille line and changing the layout of notation from a vertical to a horizontal presentation. In some cases these changes work to the advantage of the braille reader; in other cases they do not, but this fact does not affect the performance adversely.



l that this review and comparison of  
ssion markings in print and braille and  
scussion of problems will assist read-  
more accurately determining from the  
e score the intent of the composer,  
ger, or editor.

The forum is open to questions, com-  
ments, suggestions, and letters, some of  
which may be published in future issues.  
Send them to Bettye Krolick, 602 Ventura  
Road, Champaign, IL 61820.

# New Music Materials

The following works are available on loan from the Music Section, National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C. 20542.

Braille and recorded materials may also be purchased from their respective producers. Large-print scores are available on loan only. These listings show, where possible, composer, title, print publisher, producer, and Music Section catalog number.

Materials in the music collection are available on two-month loan, renewable upon request.

## Sources

**SNB.** Regione Toscana-Stamperia Braille, Istituto Nazionale dei Ciechi "Vittorio Emanuele II", Firenze 50131—Via Aurelio Nicolodi n. 2, Postale n. 5/1257

**VFB.** Verein zur Förderung der Blindenbildung e.V., 26 Bleekstrasse, Hannover-Kirchrode 3000, West Germany

## Braille

### Scores

#### Accordion—Methods

Friel

**Fisarmonica Metodo Moderno** BRM  
26198

Carisch SNB

#### Choruses, Sacred

Bach, Johann Sebastian

**Chorales (Selections)** BRM 26200

Carisch SNB

#### Electronic Organ—Methods

Giacconi

**Invito all'Organo Elettronico** BRM  
26197

Edizioni Musicali SNB

#### Harpsichord Music

Bach, Johann Sebastian

**Das Wohltemperierte Clavier** BRM  
26199

Breitkopf und Härtel SNB

Bach, Wilhelm Friedemann

**Polonaises, F. 12** BRM 26179

Ricordi SNB

#### Organ Music

Bossi, Marco Enrico

**Ausgewählte Kompositionen** BRM  
26211

Peters SNB

Bottazzo, Luigi

**La Bottazziana: 201 Pezzi** BRM 26180

Sten SNB

Remondi, Roberto

**Studi per la pedaliera** BRM 26193

Capra SNB

#### Piano Music

Bartók, Béla

**Mikrokosmos** BRM 26212

Boosey and Hawkes SNB

thoven, Ludwig van  
**Sonata No. 5**, op. 10, no. 1, C  
 minor **BRM 26310**  
 Ricordi SNB  
**Sonata No. 6**, op. 10, no. 2, F major  
**BRM 26160**  
 Ricordi SNB  
**Sonata No. 7**, op. 10, no. 3, D  
 major **BRM 26159**  
 Ricordi SNB  
**Sonata No. 8**, op. 13, C minor **BRM**  
**26158**  
 Ricordi SNB  
**Sonata No. 9**, op. 14, no. 1, E  
 major **BRM 26271**  
 Ricordi SNB  
**Sonata No. 10**, op. 14, no. 2, G  
 major **BRM 26272**  
 Ricordi SNB  
**Sonata No. 11**, op. 22, B-flat major  
**BRM 26217**  
 Ricordi SNB  
**Sonata No. 12**, op. 26, A-flat major  
**BRM 26248**  
 Ricordi SNB  
**Sonata No. 13**, op. 27, no. 1, E-flat  
 major **BRM 26277**  
 Ricordi SNB  
**Sonata No. 14**, op. 27, no. 2, C-sharp  
 minor **BRM 26245**  
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**Sonata No. 15**, op. 28, D major **BRM**  
**26265**  
 Ricordi SNB  
**Sonata No. 17**, op. 31, no. 2, D  
 minor **BRM 26228**  
 Ricordi SNB  
**Sonata No. 18**, op. 31, no. 3, E-flat  
 major **BRM 26269**  
 Ricordi SNB

- **Sonata No. 19**, op. 49, no. 1, G  
 minor **BRM 26247**  
 Ricordi SNB
- **Sonata No. 21**, op. 53, C minor **BRM**  
**26304**  
 Ricordi SNB
- **Sonata No. 26**, op. 81a, E-flat major  
**BRM 26161**  
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- **Sonata No. 27**, op. 90, E minor **BRM**  
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 Ricordi SNB
- **Sonata No. 31**, op. 110, A-flat  
 major **BRM 26255**  
 Ricordi SNB
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**BRM 25189**  
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 Ricordi SNB
- **44 Studi** **BRM 26204**  
 Ricordi SNB
- **52 Studi** **BRM 26203**  
 Ricordi SNB

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**Concerto No. 1**, op. 92 **BRM 26192**  
 Belaieff SNB

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**Goyescas (Selections)** **BRM 26183**  
 Union Musicale Franco-Espagnole SNB

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 Ricordi SNB

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**26187**  
 Ricordi SNB
  - **Sonata, K. 189f (281) B-flat major**  
**BRM 26243**  
 Ricordi SNB
  - **Sonata, K. 189g (282) E-flat major**  
**BRM 26261**  
 Ricordi SNB
  - **Sonata, K. 189h (283) G major** **BRM**  
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 Ricordi SNB
  - **Sonata, K. 205b (284) D major** **BRM**  
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 Ricordi SNB
  - **Sonata, K. 284b (309) C major** **BRM**  
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  - **Sonata, K. 284c (311) D major** **BRM**  
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  - **Sonata, K. 300d (310) A minor** **BRM**  
**26164**  
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**26264**  
 Ricordi SNB
  - **Sonata, K. 300i (331) A major** **BRM**  
**26162**  
 Ricordi SNB
  - **Sonata, K. 315c (333) B flat major**  
**BRM 26226**  
 Ricordi SNB

- **Sonata, K. 545, C major** **BRM 26**  
 Ricordi SNB
- **Sonata, K. 547a (Anh. 135, 138a) F**  
 major **BRM 26283**  
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- **Sonata, K. 576, D major** **BRM 26**  
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Paderewski, Ignacy Jan  
**Album de 12 Morceaux Choisis** **B**  
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- Ravel, Maurice
- **Jeux d'Eau** **BRM 26282**  
 Eschig SNB
  - **Sonatina** **BRM 26225**  
 Durand SNB

Schönberg, Arnold  
**Kleine Klavierstücke op. 19** **BRM**  
**26188**  
 Universal SNB

Schumann, Robert Alexander  
**Romance op. 28, no. 2, F-sharp**  
 minor **BRM 26171**  
 Ricordi SNB

Sinding, Christian  
**Frühlingsrauschen from Stücke op**  
**32** **BRM 26178**  
 Peters SNB

Tagliapietra, Gino  
**Antologica di Musica Antica e**  
**Moderna** **BRM 26190**  
 Ricordi SNB



ausig, Karl  
 ercizi Giornaliere BRM 26191  
 cordi SNB

## Piano Music, Arranged

ahms, Johannes  
 altzes op. 39 BRM 26169  
 cordi SNB  
 ieg, Edvard  
 er Gynte (Suite) No. 2 BRM 26175  
 ers SNB

## Voice Books

riale seu Ordinarium Missie BRM  
 26141  
 ition Desclée et Socii Romae SNB

## Piano Music

nt, Jacob  
 rübungen zu R. Kreutzer's u. P.  
 ode's Etuden op 37 BRM  
 6059  
 gel VFB  
 rger, Max  
 ata op. 42, no. 1, D minor BRM  
 6106  
 gel VFB

## Piano and Piano Music

ethoven, Ludwig van  
 ata No. 5, op. 24, F major BRM  
 6292  
 ordi SNB

Hauser, M.  
 Wiegenlied op. 11, no. 2 BRM 26127  
 Bosworth VFB

## Violin and Piano Music, Arranged

Mozart, Wolfgang Amadeus  
 Sonata, K. 570, B flat major BRM  
 26375  
 Peters VFB

## Vocal Music

Schinelli, Achille  
 Collana di Composizioni Polifoniche  
 Vocali BRM 26210  
 Curci SNB

Nuovo Canzoniere Italiano BRM  
 26214  
 C. Signorelli SNB

Suman, Walter  
 Cantiamo Insieme BRM 26154  
 publisher undetermined SNB

## Large Print

### Books

**Brahms: His Life and Work** 2nd  
 ed. LPM 418 by Karl Geiringer. New  
 York: Oxford University Press, 1947  
 Biography of Brahms, based on a group  
 of over a thousand letters to the composer  
 from his family and friends, and on  
 sketches and manuscripts that had gone al-

most unnoticed in former biographies of the composer.

**The Great American Popular Singers LPM 422** by Henry Pleasants. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1974

Anecdotal survey of popular singers, emphasizing personalities and idiosyncracies. Includes chapters on Bessie Smith, Ethel Waters, Louis Armstrong, Jimmie Rodgers, Bing Crosby, Mahalia Jackson, Judy Garland, and others.

**George Frideric Handel LPM 419** by Paul Henry Lang. New York: W. W. Norton, c1966

Detailed biography. Examines social and historical factors that influenced Handel's musical development.

**Schubert: A Musical Portrait LPM 420** by Alfred Einstein. New York: Oxford University Press, 1970, c1951

Biography of Franz Schubert. Information about Schubert's life is interspersed with information about his work, as Einstein traces Schubert's creative development throughout his otherwise "uneventful" life.

**Violins and Violinists LPM 421** by Franz Farga. New York: Praeger, 1969

History of the violin, violin-makers, violinists. Includes chapters on the structure of the violin, violin-makers such as the Amati, Guarneri, and Stradivarius families, and violinists such as Nicolas Paganini and Ludwig Spohr.

## Scores

### Horn Music

Kopprasch, C.

**Sixty Selected Studies LPM 394**  
C. Fischer

### Piano Music

Eckstein, Maxwell, comp.

- **The Big-Note Parade of Famous Melodies LPM 397** C. Fischer
- **My Favorite Program Album LPM 423** C. Fischer
- **Nero, Peter, arr.**  
**Peter Nero Plays Summer of '42, Shawin & Others LPM 399** Warner Bros. Publications

# The Musical Mainstream

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# The Musical Mainstream

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The *Musical Mainstream* contains several types of information. "Selected Reprints" comprised of articles reprinted from national music and news periodicals. The "Features" section carries updated information about the National Library Service music program and original articles of interest to the blind and physically handicapped. Additions to the NLS music collection are listed under "New Music Materials."

Eligible blind and physically handicapped persons may order free subscriptions to the large-print, braille, or cassette versions of *The Musical Mainstream* from their cooperating libraries or from the Music Section, National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped, Library of Congress, Washington, DC 20542.

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## *Braille Music Catalog: Instrumental Now Available*

Braille scores catalog for instrumental music, *Music and Musicians* series, is available in large print. This catalog covers music for woodwind, string, brass, percussion instruments and includes solo music and music for small ensembles. A braille edition is in preparation. Readers may order a copy of the large-print edition by calling 800/424-8567 or writing to the Music Section, National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped, Washington, D.C. 20542.

## *Dictionary of Braille Music Signs Wins Top Honors*

The *Dictionary of Braille Music Signs*, published last year by the National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped, has won the top award for 1980 books in the annual contest sponsored by the Society for Technical Communication. Rated "distinguished" by a panel of judges, the dictionary was compiled by Bettye Krolick for NLS. Copies are available in large print and braille from the Music Section, National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped, Washington, D.C. 20542.



# Selected Reprints

## Looking Ahead in Music; A Distinguished Musicologist and Educator Examines Current Problems and Trends in American Music

by Robert Freeman,  
*Sigma Alpha Iota Quarterly*, Winter 1981

As we enter the final 20 years of the twentieth century, it is an appropriate time to assess both the strengths and weaknesses of our musical life, reminding ourselves both of the achievements of the past century and of problems demanding our common attention in the decades ahead. Surely there is much to be proud of. From the primitive scenes described by such nineteenth century American musical travellers as Max Maratzek and Louis Moreau Gottschalk we have attained greater musical maturity with relative rapidity. Our composer's works are widely published, performed, and recorded. Our professional music schools train players and singers of a very high standard for positions all over the western world. Our federal and state governments have organized a National Endowment for the Arts and an array of state arts councils, supporting professional orchestras, chamber music, ballet groups, and

operatic societies. Humanistically oriented music departments have blossomed in liberal arts colleges all over the country, as have performance groups of high quality in many of the public schools. Cities all across the country have built new arts centers, each with an ambitious program embracing a broad spectrum of performing arts. For a nation whose young artists went to Europe to perfect their craft, we have become an educational center to which fine young performers from all over the world regularly turn for the completion of their studies.

But while the musical picture of America is infinitely richer and more varied than a century ago—when Verdi and Wagner were commissioned to write centennial marches—in 1980 there are threatening weaknesses in the very canvas itself. Our finest orchestras are faced with exponentially accelerating gaps between earned income and costs, trapped in a tightening vise between the artists' natural wish to retain a decent standard of living and managerial concern about too rapid advance in ticket prices. In an inflationary economy the budget of the National Endowment has leveled out and those of many of the state arts councils have actually been cut back. At a time when federal tax laws encouraging private and foundation benefactions have been modified in fashion that reduces income for the arts from those sources, previously lucrative recording contracts have dried up. Financial woes with a similar effect on the budgets of independent colleges, public school districts, libraries, and concert series threaten music in those areas as well.

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Robert Freeman, director of the Eastman School of Music, gave this address before the Musashino Academia Musicae in Tokyo in the fall of 1979. © 1981 by *Sigma Alpha Iota Quarterly*. All rights reserved. Used with permission.

concomitant aspect of the economic results from the way in which orchestras have altered their performance schedules in the past quarter century. The days of Koussevitzky, Toscanini, and Solti, when the orchestras performed relatively short seasons of 30–35 weeks, and their players both the possibility and the opportunity to be active as soloists, chamber music players, composers, teachers, and conductors of community orchestras. Today, players held concurrent part-time jobs outside of music as photographers, salesmen, stockbrokers, and real estate agents. Those were the days when orchestras rehearsed more than they performed, when they performed a wide variety of repertory including many new works, and when they and their conductors rehearsed relatively little. More recently, orchestral works have become much more difficult, requiring much more rehearsal time than is generally available as the result of a vastly increased number of performances. For the same reason—and in order to fill as many seats as possible—repertories have become much more standardized than during the 1920s and 1930s, concentrating on “classics” of the nineteenth century from which “the popular moments” are sometimes selected for distribution on a massive scale. Conductors, who fly to and from all over the world conducting the same limited repertory in each of several seasons, find their new lives more remunerative and less taxing, for they are obliged to perform fewer works and to involve themselves less in the personnel problems inevitable in any complex organization. The or-

chestral players, who have little time for any other endeavor beyond their work in the orchestras, enjoy apparently better job security and an improved standard of living. But in many cases the players have lost much of their former pride. Performing the Beethoven 7th or the Schubert Unfinished for the \_\_\_\_\_ hundredth time, they are relatively happy if they are solo wind or brass players; and some of the backstand string players under 35 are ambitious for promotion. But most of the *tutti* players have resigned themselves to endless repetition of standard repertory under conductors whose principal concern is not the future of the groups they lead. In this sense, as Edward Arain pointed out in his book on the Philadelphia Orchestra, *Bach, Beethoven, and Bureaucracy*, the new regimen has reduced the morale of the majority of players, now often more interested in better working conditions than in more exciting performances. The result is the spectre of labor unrest and repeated strikes that threaten the future integrity of both orchestral and operatic seasons.

Among the string players who populate even the principal desks of major orchestras are many musicians trained in celebrated conservatories as soloists. Having taken part unsuccessfully in one or more international competitions, they realize that they can become neither the Fritz Kreisler nor the Robert Mann of the next generation, resigning themselves, too, to the life of orchestral drudgery for which their *éducation manquée* has prepared them. To become a touring soloist, a concertizing artist, was a new dream as recently as the nineteenth century; but it has been an en-

during one, no matter how unrealistic for the dreamer. Physicians and lawyers and economists all spend long, expensive years in college and professional school preparing for anticipated careers in public service. Violinists and 'cellists and pianists normally begin at the age of five or six, spurred on by zealous parents and teachers who too often see in the child's potential success the fulfillment of their own dashed ambition. In the 1930s and 40s the number of careers for soloists was pitifully small—maximally 1–2 percent of the graduates of the two or three American music schools that narrow the educational focus of their curricula with this as principal objective. But each year more than 10,000 young Americans of collegiate age toil through uninterrupted hours of practice for "careers" that will not, indeed *cannot* possibly materialize. The principal booking agent of one of America's two or three most respected managerial firms for musical talent recently told me, in all seriousness, that there are two concert pianists in the country who earn \$100,000 or more each year by playing the piano; in addition, I was told, there were five or six who earn about \$50,000, fifteen or twenty who may earn \$20,000, and thousands who earn \$2,000 or less. While the figures are probably impressionistic, they are not grossly inaccurate. The most disheartening aspect of the prospect for potential concert artists is not that very few will be chosen, but that some of the few chosen will not be the very best, but quite demonstrably, the most steely nerved, the most marketable, or those with the best connections, for the life of the concert artist is, after all, partly show

business and all that goes with it. Discouraging for the future is that too many of those who do not succeed in the star system turn to careers in teaching which, disappointed about everything touches on music, they set out to prepare a new generation of concert artists and the necessarily resulting casualties for careers that will be even fewer. Worst of all is the nineteenth-century system engendered by a great deal of fear and defensiveness, encouraging too many a musician that the best way to succeed is by demeaning and discouraging his colleagues.

To a great many performing musicians produced by the star system the study of musical theory and history, even more the study of materials that have no connection with music, is clearly "academic," a happy expenditure of time desperately needed for practice. Such knowledge, it is heard, is perhaps worth having if one does not succeed as a performer and has to teach in a college, but not otherwise. Partly this results from past emphasis on analytic techniques that have had virtually nothing to do with the performance of music, partly from historical studies that lead students to waste time memorizing lists of dates, open numbers, and shelf list schemes. A short time ago I was shocked at the televised comments of a distinguished and nationally known performer, an artist who a few years ago had been one of a well-known school. Asked in the midst of a Beethoven sonata rehearsal whether the piano ought to imitate the violin in the performance of a motivic *sfzando*, the pianist was told that it makes no difference which edition one used, the



efforts to produce critical editions are nothing but baloney.” It is but one abyss in the well-known gulf between scholars and performers that historians and musicologists devote so much attention to the development of critical editions of any of the very best performers have little idea how to use.

An anecdote of another frustrated effort to bridge the same gap comes from a colloquy on performance practice problems at Tanglewood a decade ago by a group of distinguished Bach scholars. In singing the aria “*Erbarme dich*” from the *Matthew Passion*, one of the scholars pointed out that if one follows the many of performance treatises stemming from the Bach circle, the opening *Schleifer* of the aria is played on the beat. But he pointed out, too, that Bach disdained parallel fifths and octaves, eliminating them in his inner voices whenever he noted them in composition drafts. Reminding the group that the second section of the aria begins with the outer voices both beginning on the dominant, the scholar concluded that a performance with the *Schleifer* on the beat would produce a dissonance of parallel octaves in the *da Capo*. Though the point of his example was an intelligent and sensitive performer should make their own informed judgment, the young performers present were annoyed at what several of them instantly regarded as a wish to obfuscate. They finally remarked with irritation, “We don’t have time to worry about these questions. We want you to tell us the best practice manner for the performance of this aria.” To which the scholar replied with

great intensity that no human being, Bach included, could possibly know in every instance what is “authentic” and what not.

Part of the performer’s distrust for scholars comes in fact from the press of time that *does* make any lengthy consideration of individual performance alternatives practically difficult; part of it comes from common observation of the inadequate musicology’s hesitation in the past quarter century about making decisions that are based on internal rather than external evidence. The scholars themselves have come to understand that it is more reliable to reach conclusions about the authenticity of a work or about the chronology of a composer’s developing style on the basis of watermarks, handwriting analysis, bindings, and liturgical calendars than through an understanding of musical style itself. Musicology’s failure to contribute very much to our still primitive manner of discussing what makes a single work coherent is partly responsible for the theorists’ present interest in the development of a national professional society of their own.

Ever since the end of the eighteenth century, when the previous system of patronage for musical composition suffered severe dislocation, there have been recurring complaints about a widening gap between the composer and his audience. Since Beethoven’s time there has been a vastly broadened support for the composer to create what he feels must be written, but some of the complaints may be justified in part. The principal fiscal support for American composers is now our country’s colleges and universities, which grant tenure to composers largely as the result of



recommendations from other composers, in a fashion that the employers of Monteverdi, Corelli, Bach, and Haydn would have thought dangerous. Surely it has made many bristle to reflect on the implications of Milton Babbitt's provocative article of 20 years ago, "Who Cares if You Listen?" Some of us are anxious that too many young composers are writing works susceptible to facile exegesis in an accompanying dissertation, or music that they cannot hear adequately performed given the constraints of even extended rehearsal time. Part of the problem involves the availability of strong, live performances of new works, but many of the country's most important music schools act as though instruction in the notation and performance techniques for music of our own time is peripheral to their main concern—a kind of frosting on a nineteenth-century cake. The electronic medium represents an important addition to the composers' treasury of expressive means, but something very important will be lost if more than the present handful of composers becomes convinced that only electronically can they be guaranteed accurate performances of their musical intentions.

In the last several years I have heard amazing performances by American school children of the Webern cantatas and of an arrangement of the *Rite of Spring* for wind ensemble, sung and played in a manner that would have done credit to any professional music school. But we are all familiar with school music groups whose performances and competitions provide a market for inexpensive instruments and uniforms without bringing anything ap-

proaching musical happiness to performer or audience. Striking is our failure as a musical society to develop an intelligible approach to the use of language as a means toward improving musical perception, largely a matter of the improvement of person's ability to find his present orientation about what has already happened in work and what will yet be. In the school classes in "music appreciation" concern themselves with the instruments of the orchestra, with the lives of the composers, and with a certain limited number of works (*The Sorcerer's Apprentice*, *Pacific 231*, *A Night on Bald Mountain*, *Scheherazade*) which are alleged, for reasons clearly historic, to convey narrative. (The music of *Peter and the Wolf* conveys what it does only in connection with the verbal introduction and the text that accompanies the music.) Comparatively little thought has been given as yet to how the very young perceive basic musical process. It practically never happens that the concerts of choruses, bands, and orchestras of primary and secondary schools are prepared in connection with theory classes that focus on the repertory presently under study for performance.

In many of the best liberal arts college music departments, the performance of music is treated in Aristotelian terms, an anti-intellectual activity involving wholly mechanical work that is unworthy of academic credit. Introductory course activity on this level operates from the premise that, since the eyes of an 18-year-old are better trained than his ears, his ability to perceive a piece will be assisted through his eyes by reading scores, a simple

gh achievement if one is trained to do little at a time from the second or third e but one which can only seem like learning when one attempts to develop a crash basis during the freshman of college.

uch too little study has been given to inds of elementary and secondary performance activity which leads to enrollment on the collegiate level in music ses or in performing groups. (There fewer than 400 young people in 1975 took the worthwhile Advanced Placement Examination in music administered the past several years by the Education Testing Service.) To my knowledge no y has been given to correlations between work done in music at secondary school or college on the one hand, and phony or opera attendance 10, 20, or years later on the other. We do know it pens relatively seldom that professionalicians perform music with their friends night off just for fun, or that attenderts of colleagues to become better acquainted with unfamiliar works. It has ed to me for a long time that the commonly conceived dichotomy betweenring about music and the performance music does nothing but harm to theent and future of music.

The great American composer, Roger ons, 20 years ago wrote a wonderful book *The Musical Experience*, in h he posits three levels of musical itivity: the composer's, the performer's and the listener's. In Sessions' view ntensity of the composer's perception s own work is probably greater than performer's, whose intensity of percep-

tion is probably greater on most occasions than the listener's. As Sessions sees things, it should be the objective of all musical education to make those three perceptions as similar as possible. Most Americans lead active, busy lives. And the great majority of them, unlike the dukes, princes, and cardinals who sponsored the arts as recently as the eighteenth century, have very little direct contact with music. Lacking till now both the background and the leisure to relish discriminatingly the beauties of the chamber works of Haydn and Mozart or of the operas of Verdi and Wagner they settle often without choice for repeated performance of a few "classics" determined by remote popes of musical judgment. If most Americans are to take the time, they think it important that they hear the "best" conductor leading the "finest" orchestra with the "greatest" soloist performing one of the most "important" dozen works over a stereo system of the "highest" quality. The tragedy is that the processes of Madison Avenue create laws of supply and demand whereby the public will attend performances by a few stars who receive \$15,000 an evening, but will generally ignore performances of artists of essentially equal quality whose press has been less sensational. These are laws of supply and demand that wreak terrible havoc with the best long-term interests of music itself. Therein lies a special problem for our country's very small critical press on music. If the public really cannot tell whether a work or a performance is of first quality or not, what the paper says the next morning does not mean a great deal except to the self esteem of the

concertgoer. (All performers' agents make nonsense of what the critics say by quoting out of context in any case.) The absence of any vigorous exchange of opinion on music in our metropolitan press—of the kind one would expect for sports or politics, say—leads too many city editors to the conclusion that the presence of a leading music critic can be accorded to a low priority. "If it does not help return a good profit, what good is it?" is a continuing problem for the American conscience to wrestle with in many areas. I believe it would stimulate reader interest were performers reviewed in the metropolitan press encouraged to reply in public to their critics, correcting errors of fact. Authors of books and scholarly articles expect the opportunity to do this; performing musicians do not do so as the result of a taboo.

The assumptions on which the education of too many of this country's future professional musicians are based involve beginning early and focusing narrowly. Additional assumptions include many hours of practice, frequent private instruction, the learning of repertory through imitation rather than through the development of general principles, concentration on works of the nineteenth century, general ignorance of "popular" music and jazz, a disdain for studies in music theory and history, and an expectation that someone else will be responsible for audience development and future funding for the arts. These are the fundamentals of the present Juilliard curriculum outlined in the summer 1976 issue of *Change* by Helen Epstein, and they are generally characteristic of faculty attitudes in many other schools as well.

But history shows a much greater diversity of musical excellence than the nineteenth-century model for the production of stars would suggest. Composers of the Renaissance and baroque times were expected to act as executive directors for the musical life of a court or city, responsible for the hiring of musicians, the copying of parts, the directing of performances, and often for instruction in musical and extra-musical subjects, as well as for rapid composition of many new works. J.S. Bach was both the best organist of his day and a fine string player; Mozart was a distinguished pianist and string player; Beethoven a professional player on a variety of instruments; Schumann and Berlioz active essayists; Wagner and Mahler distinguished orchestral conductors; Chopin, Liszt, and Rachmaninoff among the world's most eminent piano virtuosi—the catalogue the extra-compositional musical achievements of a few well-known eighteenth- and nineteenth-century musicians now known principally as composers. Distinguished musicians come even now from a much wider variety of educational backgrounds than is generally imagined. Pinchas Zukerman, Mischa Dichter, Jan DeGaetani, and Lynn Harrell, to name a handful of randomly chosen outstanding modern performers, all come from training in a traditional conservatory. William Warfield, David Zinman, Michael Tilson Thomas, and David Burge, all were educated in comprehensive music schools. Leonard Bernstein, Gilbert Kalish, Alvin Curtis, and Samuel Rhodes are all products of the music departments of liberal arts colleges. Malcolm Frager, Charles Ro-



es Oliver Buswell III, and Richard Gill  
e educated in liberal arts colleges with  
ors in fields other than music (Russian,  
ch, fine arts, and economics, respec-  
y).

ne nineteenth-century model for the  
uction of performers is misleading in  
mplication that similar talents should  
ained in parallel tracks toward identi-  
objectives. Music's house, to paraphrase  
Bible, hath many mansions. Many, but  
o means all, musicians come from  
lies of professional musicians, or from  
lies where music has been a strong  
ational force. Many musicians are  
sed with so-called absolute pitch, but  
y of the best are not. Many musicians  
read at sight with facility. Many can  
a variety of instruments or realize fig-  
bass. Many can read a variety of  
tern European languages essential to  
ic. Some can hear an orchestral score  
nally without recourse to either phono-  
h or keyboard (but many advertised as  
ductors cannot do so). Many musicians  
play by ear or improvise. Some can re-  
uce by memory similar excerpts from  
e repertoires of works. Others have  
ole performing from memory at all.  
e can articulate music's future needs  
uasively. Some can promote their own  
etability. Some can teach and inspire  
rs.

ome composers, like Schultz, Corelli,  
oin, or Wagner spent distinguished ca-  
concentrating on a single genre or,  
J.S. Bach, with a particular objective  
ew. At Eastman we have had an  
ually large number of talented musi-  
s whose principal professional achieve-

ment bears no apparent relationship to the  
objective dreamed of as a freshman. A  
composer who headed a major recording  
company, a clarinetist who became a lead-  
ing conductor, a pianist who headed the  
Music Division of the Library of Congress,  
an oboist who invented a new kind of  
popular music, and a musicologist who has  
managed major orchestras are typical ex-  
amples. Their careers parallel those from  
other countries and schools. Koussevitzky,  
it will be remembered, was a double bass  
virtuoso turned conductor, publisher, and  
patron for young composers. Oliver Strunk  
was a theatre organist who became one of  
this country's two or three most distin-  
guished scholars and teachers of scholars.  
Aaron Copland, one of our century's two  
or three most important composers, is now  
concentrating his attention on conducting,  
as has been Pierre Boulez, now turning to  
the badly needed development of musical  
life in his native France. Paul Hindemith,  
first an operatic concertmaster and string  
quartet player, then a leading composer  
turned theorist-teacher, collegium director,  
and finally conductor of major orchestras,  
is another outstanding example of a man  
who loved music so deeply that he divided  
his professional life among several diver-  
gent musical interests.

The development of this quality—a  
genuine love of music, an enthusiasm for  
learning new works and for restudying fa-  
miliar pieces in the light of new insights  
and changed perspectives—is in my judg-  
ment the most valuable single contribution  
that a professional school of music can  
make to its students and graduates.  
Continuing intellectual curiosity about mu-



sic and everything that concerns music will interest a backstand violist in the rehearsal technique of a new conductor. It will give the spark for new ideas about better teaching to a first grade teacher whose students are just beginning to perceive aural patterns. It will interest a fledgling concert artist in the budgetary battles of the state arts council. It will interest college music professors in efforts to discriminate analytically between performances that are merely correct and those that are deeply moving. Leonard Bernstein, who has often been criticized as a pianist for his interest in conducting, as a conductor for his interest in composition, and as a composer for his ambivalence between Broadway and more "serious" genres, recently returned to Harvard as Charles Eliot Norton lecturer. In that capacity and with the assistance of the Boston Symphony, he videotaped six illustrated lectures that will stimulate other similar productions in the future. More important, his comments in the first lecture about parallels between musical syntax and linguistic structure put forward a generation ago by MIT's Noam Chomsky, have stimulated a new interdisciplinary consortium of music, literature, and linguistics professors at MIT, Brandeis, and Harvard to a collectively taught seminar, the research for which will be seminal for our understanding of music as a language and for the development of new audiences for music. (It is impossible to estimate how many potential listeners have given up on their own abilities to perceive music as an intelligible means of communication upon failing to perceive any sensible connection between Strauss's *Also*

*sprach Zarathustra* and Nietzsche's or the result of their failure to hallucinate properly with the *Symphonie Fantastique*.)

A more comprehensive interest in music and its attendant phenomena, more emphasis on the musician's obligation to the future of music, and less stress on the importance of succeeding at any cost in an individual career as travelling virtuoso will produce a healthier outlook for musicians of the future and for music itself. This is not to say that we ought not to place a high premium on thoughtful practice and on the continuing development of fine players and singers. It is certainly not to suggest that we have reason to be critical in any way of the distinguished concert artists of our own generation. But it is to underline the futility of music—and for many who love music—of persuading additional generations to subject themselves to an intensely competitive struggle from which there are very few winners and a great many losers. To this end I think it important that we train more comprehensively educated musicians—young men and women who can read scores, realize figured bass, discover new repertory, write their own program notes, persuade new audiences to attend other concerts and congressmen not yet elected to appropriate new funding for the National Endowment. In such a musical society those who are bored and frustrated will be trained toward the possibility of changing careers, within music or to other fields. Musicians may become less antagonistic to one another, less protective of their previous prejudices. (One of the most curious of these is the cleavage that has existed for the past century perhaps

on “serious” music—some of which is neither very serious nor very good—and popular” music, which goes out of fashion as quickly as some eighteenth-century virtuosity that now counts as “serious.”) Such a musical society perhaps even the American Federation of Musicians could be persuaded of gains for all from longer-term investments for the future of music. It is utopian and possibly even damaging to think of an America in which 50 percent of the adult population subscribed to string quartet concerts, but it is hard not to dream of what it would mean to musicians and their patrons were we able to raise the present concert-going audience from 5 to 10 or 15

percent of the adult population.

There was a day, 200 years ago when music was composed to dance to, to eat with, and to worship by. Part of the message of the nineteenth century is that music, when paid attention to, as a professional or amateur performer or as a listener, is one of life’s most inspiring forces. It is part of the democratic tradition that this very great happiness be extended to as many of our people as possible. Especially for that reason it is time, I believe, to try to change the educational basis for young musicians of the future and with it, the way in which musicians regard their place in American society.

## Joseph Macerollo

by Matthew Clark

*Contemporary Keyboard*, October 1980

Accordionists, in all likelihood, do not suffer from persecution complexes more than any other group of normal citizens, but every now and then, when you hear one of them wondering in bewilderment why the accordion has not shaken its image as a cornball instrument in the otherwise chic world of modern keyboards, you sense the frustration that many of this lot must occasionally feel, along with the humor that helps them cope with the situation.

Take Joseph Macerollo, one of the most respected figures in the progressive fringe of the accordion community. On the liner notes to his album *Interaccodinotesta*, this internationally acclaimed artist, this veteran of recitals and performances with a long list of contemporary chamber ensembles, was moved to write the lines that hang like a despairing cloud above. Seldom has a baseball metaphor been given such a glum application.

Despite these odds, though, Macerollo has been batting nearly 1.000 in the Avant-Garde League, thanks to his masterful work with the Giulietti Bassetti free-bass or chromatic accordion, his Louisville Slugger. Thus equipped, he has appeared in concert with a variety of respected conductors, like Victor Feldbrill, Boyd Neel, Szymon Goldberg, and Luciano Berio, and with such instrumental aggregations as the

Orford String Quartet, the Purcell String Quartet, the Toronto Symphony String Orchestra, the National Arts Centre Ensemble, and the Vancouver Chamber Orchestra. In 1975 he chaired the International Accordion Symposium in Toronto, with Yuri Kazaakov, Hugo Noth, James Nightingale, Alain Abbott, and other well-known artists in attendance. When not teaching at Queen's University, the University of Toronto, or the Royal Conservatory of Toronto, he frequently performs modernist works written for him by some of Canada's top composers. In addition to all this, he has published a valuable reference volume, *The Accordion Resource Manual* [Avondale Press, P.O. Box 451, Willowdale, Ontario M2N 5T1 Canada]. Given the critical acclaim he has won, you might say that Macerollo has scored a free-bass hit.

Although he is known mainly for his work with contemporary music, Macerollo's heritage as an accordionist is in the conservative traditions of the instrument. Born in Guelph, Ontario, sixty miles west of Toronto, he was steered toward the accordion by his parents, who were eager for him to follow in the footsteps of his uncle, an accordion player specializing in wedding gigs for local Italian families. By the age of eleven, he was leading his own combo. "A friend of mine used to pick me up and literally put the accordion on my lap," Macerollo laughs. "I used to play for four hours almost nonstop at these weddings. I was one of those zombie players

Before long, young Joey was expanding his field, playing at political functions, switching from Liberal to Conservative rallies night after night during elections, and

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ity fund-raisers; for seventeen years he worked for the Ontario Reformatory. It wasn't until 1963 that his horizons extended beyond Guelph, however. In that year he won the Canadian Accordion Championships, and on the strength of that victory he was sent to the World Accordion Championships, where, in successive years, he placed ninth and fourth.

Meanwhile, Macerollo was pursuing his academic degree, and in 1965 he graduated with a bachelor's degree from the University of Toronto. Originally he had been a musicology major, but he dropped that major because his heart was more with bellows than with strings. No accordion major was available, however, so Macerollo wound up earning his degree in musicology. He did manage to squeeze in one performance on his favorite instrument, a performance that earned him his first teaching post.

In '65, because nobody really knew I played accordion, I asked to do a solo recital on accordion," he remembers. "Of course hardly anybody came, but one person who did was Dr. Boyd Neel [formerly principal of the Royal Conservatory of Toronto]. I didn't know him personally, but I asked Richard Johnson, who was head of the Conservatory Summer School, to ask if I would be interested in teaching accordion. I always remember Dr. Johnson's remarks. He said, 'I hate accordion, and I don't know why there should be a place for it, but nevertheless I'll go along with it, because my boss wanted me to ask you.' " Prompted up by the enthusiasm of the principal, Macerollo accepted the offer, and in the summer of 1967 he began his teaching career before six young students.

Macerollo's concert career began picking up at about the same time. In January 1967 he premiered the first accordion concerto ever written by a Canadian. The composer, Morris Surdin, had been commissioned by Boyd Neel, who conducted the debut performance with Macerollo and the Hart House orchestra in Toronto. Five months later they presented it again, at the Canadian Pavillion in the Montreal Expo; this performance was recorded and later broadcast by Radio Canada International.

Since then, Macerollo has earned his M.A. in musicology, recorded a number of albums, and organized a syllabus at the Royal Conservatory on free-bass accordion.

Just to reassure ourselves that free-bass accordion had nothing to do with illegal drug mixtures, we began with an attempt to clarify just what it is.

### **What exactly does the term "free-bass accordion" mean?**

It refers to an arrangement of single-note buttons on the left hand, which allows for a pitch range of anywhere up to six and a half octaves, so you would think almost like a pianist. The only thing is, on a piano you think of the keys as two rows moving in semitones, more or less, whereas on the accordion we have three rows of semitones, but it's all chromatically arranged. These buttons give us a fantastic range. They are also close together, so we can get a wider span than on the piano. It also differs from the piano in that the tone quality of the two manuals is different; the sort of nasal quality you get in the left hand and the quality of sound on the right are quite dissimilar, so you have to think of them as two com-



pletely separate manuals. And there's a slightly different thinking process involved in terms of how you move on keys and how you move on buttons. The touch is also a bit different.

## **Don't most accordions have chord buttons for the left hand?**

That's the system you normally find. Everybody has an accordion in their closet, so to speak—the standard accordion, on which you play all your waltzes and polkas for dances. Basically the left hand on that accordion is arranged as a folk instrument diatonically in fifths. Take a bass note, let's say C, on the left hand. The note you have above it is a G, and above the G is a D, so it's arranged in the cycle of fifths. Then below the C is the F, and below the F is the B flat. Now each one of these bass note buttons has corresponding buttons to produce a major chord, a minor chord, a seventh chord, and a diminished chord, so you can play boom-chank-chank, boom-chank-chank in any key.

## **How wide a range do the single-note buttons cover?**

The single-note range is only an octave. In fact, it's less than an octave. It doesn't produce an actual scale, as you have on the piano or the free-bass accordion. Some people have tried to give the illusion of that through skillful changing of registers, but that's not the same thing, really. Our registers on the left hand allow you a soprano, alto, tenor, and bass. But it's really an awkward thing, because you have to switch among them while you're in movement.

## **And the free bass solves that problem.**

It solves all that without necessarily relying on switches.

## **So before you started on the free-bass accordion. . .**

I was on the standard accordion. The kinds of things I actually played on my cital in '65 were contemporary pieces written for standard accordion. I was always partial to contemporary music. I was raised on polkas and waltzes, and I played all transcriptions, the mutilated versions of orchestral works of the nineteenth century, badly transcribed. I used to play all these things. Although I enjoyed it, I felt that in the light of my musical experience it was redundancy, and I was very frustrated by it. So when I heard that people were writing original music for the standard accordion, I started playing it. I played things like Paul Creston's *Prelude and Dance*, Alexander Tcherepnin's *Partita*, Marlon Lockwood's *Sonata Fantasia*, and a *Rondo* by Otto Leuning. A lot of very fine people in the States had been commissioned to write for the American Accordionists Association. The Association was in some ways doing the right thing, but I felt that in other ways it wasn't. They were commissioning these pieces in order to say that we are getting idiomatic music for the standard accordion and that therefore the standard accordion should be the classical accordion. In actual fact they should have been commissioning these fellows to write for the free-bass accordion.

## **When you began teaching at the Royal Conservatory, how did you go about devising an instructional program?**

There was a committee of three people, including myself, that set up a syllabus for free-bass accordion. Basically I worked with ten or twelve composers in Canada

y gave us seven or eight hundred pages of music written at the elementary level, 1, say, beginner stages to intermediate, even a couple of advanced things. Seymour & Hawkes [30 W 57th St., New York, NY 10019] published a few of them, Waterloo Music [dist. by Associated Music Publishers, Inc., 866 Third Ave., New York, NY 10022] agreed to publish at eighty percent of it.

### **What kind of pieces were they?**

They were all original pieces. We ended doing transcriptions of some things like Bartók's earliest keyboard works, but staying away from the Romantic period; we stayed away from that. It was either Baroque or very early elementary Classical or modern works. We also stayed away from anything idiomatic for the piano. Then we played all the contemporary music. We actually were way in front of the instructional programs for a lot of other instruments in making a transition to contemporary music, and the accordion was something of a new instrument in terms of being formally taught. Our study books, for instance, are dexterity drills, like Hanon and Czerny, studies in compositional technique. So a student of eight or nine is already playing pieces in polytonal keys, and we've got students playing twelve-tone works.

### **How do you teach both standard and free-bass at the Conservatory?**

Well, we only examine and teach on the free-bass accordion, with the result that we've alienated almost 99 percent of the accordion world. Pretty much everybody plays the standard accordion. But this did create some pressure on the very aggressive-minded young people coming up, and a

number of teachers made the transition after looking very carefully at what we're doing.

### **How has the accordion scene changed since you began your program at the Conservatory?**

In 1970 the first accordion major was accepted at Queen's University, and that was free-bass. And in 1972 the Faculty of Music at the University of Toronto instituted the accordion major. Since then it has been all uphill. I've got six accordion majors at U. of T. right now, and six at Queen's. You can use the accordion as a major at the University of Calgary. We've had about fifteen works written for accordion and varying combinations at an advanced level. There are three Canadian works for accordion and string quartet, three works for accordion and string orchestra, two works for accordion and four synthesizers, two works for accordion and five percussion instruments, and two works for accordion and guitar. All of these pieces have been performed as well.

### **You must be pleased by the progress being made in your field.**

If you had asked me ten years ago what I thought could be accomplished in a decade, I would have never believed we could have done as much as we have. It's gone three times faster than I expected. But there are areas where there's a lot of work to be done. For instance, we're such an isolated group, and this is such an isolated phenomenon, that nobody really knows about what's happening other than the highly specialized people who are working in it. The general commercial public is not aware of what we're doing. Little by little I think these opportunities will open up. The

accordion is an image thing. You'd be surprised. You tell somebody you play the accordion, and right away you're branded. You might as well be in the same category as a banjo or bagpipes or something like that. It's sort of a non-serious instrument, or it's not usable in a jazz sense.

### **There are some well-known jazz players, though.**

Sure, you have fine players like Tommy Gumina, who played for [clarinetist] Buddy De Franco over the years. Gordie Fleming, who's now living in Toronto, is a very, very fine and generally tasty accordionist. The person we know most is Art Van Damme, who told me that he can't even go to the bathroom at Customs without hearing his music. His is typically the Muzak accordion sound. Then there's Dick Contina, who's the show-man type. But he's limited the accordion thing because he sings, he performs with his kid, and he's into some piano work. He's seen by a lot of people, but he's not a good accordion player; he's a very bad one. And then you get people like Myron Floren, who could have done a lot for the accordion. You would think that he and Lawrence Welk, given the opportunity of their show—they practically run it together—would give some young kid in the States an opportunity to appear on the program, even if they played two minutes of free-bass music. But they wouldn't. Sometimes I think they're afraid of the changes that are taking place, afraid these young kids could wipe them off the map musically. And also they probably feel their audience isn't ready for it. But I think that if you've got a successful program, you can bomb on it for two minutes and people

aren't going to turn you off. Welk's credibility has been established for so long. When the accordion has been so underrated over the years and since it's been so good to both of them, you would think they'd just extend themselves even a modest inch to give some kid a break, and they just won't do it. It's really a tragedy. It's like how they say in women's lib that sometimes your biggest obstacles are women. I feel the same way in terms of the accordion. The biggest obstacle we've faced has been accordionists themselves, who've been absolutely militant in their rejection. In a sense we've been very fortunate having contemporary music, because we've polarized ourselves from this part of the accordion community. But it has hurt, because we don't reach the public that well. As a result, if a kid starts with accordion he or she is going to begin on the standard model and then make that difficult transition, if and when he decides to, to the free bass.

### **Some of your students are teaching free-bass accordion now, however.**

That's true. We've taken about ten years to get to this point. We've got about four hundred students in and around southern Ontario playing free bass. I'm just in the process of forming something called the Classical Accordion Society of Canada [3296 Cindy Cresc., Mississauga, Ont. L4Y 3J6, Canada]. I know that name sounds very general and vague, but the word "classical" is supposed to take care of the separation between the commercial repertoire and what we're trying to do. I am a misnomer, because nobody really knows what you mean by classical music, but a



same time I didn't want to create a title like, say, the Chromatic Free-Bass Action Society, because nobody would know then what you were talking about. The title we chose does the job well enough of suggesting that there's a difference in the kind of music we're interested in. We're trying to encourage research, commissions, and acceptance by educators, ultimately leading to public awareness.

**How would you help someone who can't live in Toronto, but wants to play free-bass accordion?**

We would find a way to get a teacher to them. In some cases it doesn't have to be an accordion teacher. If we could get a piano teacher interested in free bass, that person could end up teaching it. I do have piano teachers studying with me just to learn about the accordion. So wherever interest is with the student, we can find a way of getting instruction. I've also got a lot of talented students who come from all over Canada. These kids were interested enough to travel a little distance to get a lesson. Some of them are much better than the players you had through the old methods of instruction. I'm not putting down other accordion teachers; I just believe that nobody really thought about pursuing new ways of shedding light on repertoire or teaching methods. They all taught the same stuff, and basically were content to play the same old way with an accordion, orchestra or solo, doing the same old material. Very few of them extended themselves beyond what every accordion studio was doing.

**What new techniques are you imparting to your students?**

I'm working with my students on very complex ideas of breathing. A lot of it is connected with whether you believe that the secret of playing the accordion is in the bellows. I feel that's partly true, but I tie the relationship of the bellows to the weight of the hands. I teach the complete body as part of the production of sound. Lots of times when you hear a student playing the accordion, you hear that the instrument is totally strapped in. They just push in and out. For me, that's like saying that if you drop your rear end on a piano you're going to get a sound. The mere fact that you get sound by pushing in and out is not a secret. The question is how you breathe it. The bellows pressure and the weight of the sound are tied together. And you have to know that your buttons have to go down quicker than your right hand, because the reed response varies between the hands. So weight and pressure and rates at which responses take place and then are articulated by the bellows stress, are what I teach. In some German and Czech schools they teach that the secret is only in the bellows, and they don't relate hand and body motions, with the result that the sound is somewhat harsh. It comes out a bit sloppy, and you can really tell where the bellows are being changed.

**How do people back in Guelph react to the music you're playing now?**

Even my own father still says to me, "What are you doing?" I play some of these things for him, and he admires what I'm doing, but unfortunately he just can't understand it. I played at the Guelph Spring



Festival in 1970 and again in '72. I played two works—one was the piece for accordion and string orchestra, with the McGill ensemble, and I did a thing with the Orford Quartet. Both were very mild selections. The audience came in droves because I'm a native of Guelph. Everybody wanted to hear Joey play, but Joey didn't play what they thought he was going to play. And many of them realized that a gap had set in between what I was doing and what they thought I was going to do. It came as a shock; they were all sort of taken aback, but they accepted it because it was me. Had it not been a local hero sort of thing they probably would have been swearing about having to pay money to go to such a stupid concert, but as a result of who I was they accepted it. They said, "Well, . . . it's different!"

## **Joseph Macerollo:**

### **an Annotated Discography**

**Hart House Orchestra** (performing Surdin's *Concert No. 1* for accordion and string orchestra), Radio Canada Interna-

tional (c/o Canadian Broadcasting Corp., P.O. Box 500, Station A, Toronto, Ontario M5W 1E6, Canada), RC1-238.

**Interaccodinotesta** (performing Pentland's *Interplay* for accordion and string quartet with the Purcell String Quartet, Shafer's *Testa d'Adriane* with soprano Mary Morrison, Krenek's *Acco-Music*, and Nordheim's *Dinosaurus* for accordion and string quartet), Melbourne (c/o Waterloo Music Co., 3 Regina St. N., P.O. Box 250, Waterloo, Ontario N2J 4A5, Canada), SMLP 4034.

**Joe Macerollo, Free-Bass Accordion** (performing Surdin's Serious I, II, V, movements from Wuensch's *Mini-Suites*, Dolin's *Sonata*, and Fiala's *Sinfonietta Concertata* for accordion, harpsichord, and string orchestra, with the McGill Chamber Orchestra), Radio Canada International, RCI-385.

**Shafer-Loving/Toi** (an audio-visual tone poem for soprano, three mezzo-sopranos, two or three speakers, dancers, chamber orchestra, tape, and accordion), Melbourne SMLP 4035-6.

## Preparing for a Performance Career

Karen Berger,

Cent,

September/December 1980

Without doubt you have already been told that art was buried in a pauper's grave, you're probably familiar with the prototype of the starving artist forced to play on tables while looking for that one chance. You've heard the odds are against you, but while wanting to be a professional performing musician may not be the most practical goal, you think you have the ability and interest to give it a try. Deciding what you do after high school is your most immediate and important concern. Going to a college or a conservatory is no means the only option. You may prefer to stay with a particularly good teacher at home for a few more years or enter contests and auditions to get as much performing experience as you can. But going to college does offer some advantages and benefits, and it is the path chosen by the vast majority of young musicians.

### Choosing a school

If you are serious about a career in music performance, it makes sense to try to find the best school for training in your instrument and the program of study com-

mensurate with your musical goals. Music is a very competitive field, and when faced with the countless auditions as a young performer, you need the assurance that your training and background have developed your abilities to their full potential.

Music schools fall into two main categories: conservatories, and schools or departments within a larger college or university. Both have their advantages and disadvantages. The important thing to realize is that the quality of your music education will not necessarily be determined by which type of music school you choose, but rather by how well you match the particular school with your particular interests.

The conservatory is typically more performance-oriented, leaving little time for courses in other fields. Your schedule is geared to the premise that you are expected to spend most of your time practicing and will be required to perform. Of course, you will still take courses in theory, music history, repertory, composition, and that nemesis of all music students not gifted with perfect pitch—ear-training.

A music school or department in a college or university will expose you to no less pressure but will give you an added dimension. Most universities have general education requirements, and you could find yourself enrolled in a course in experimental biology or macro-economics. Professors in these departments may be less sympathetic when your midterm examination conflicts with an impromptu master class by a visiting performer; but if you are really interested in Indian cave dwelling, Renaissance art, or the history of philosophy, a university might be a better choice

Karen Berger, a free-lance writer living in Chicago, is a piano graduate from Northern University. © 1980 by *Accent*. All rights reserved. Used with permission.

for you. Many universities are as performance-oriented as a conservatory. You'll still practice anywhere from three to eight hours a day, and you'll still have to be able to write, read, sing, and play diminished seventh chords and identify Beethoven opus numbers.

When applying to a specific college or conservatory, there are a number of things to consider. Does the school have a teacher—or more than one—with whom you would really like to study? If you don't get along with your teacher, can you change? If a school's reputation is important to you, find out what music professionals think about its program and faculty in general and your major area in particular. How many music students are there? Will you study with a full-fledged faculty member as a freshman and throughout your undergraduate years, or will you be assigned to a graduate student? If you are proficient in more than one instrument, does the school afford the opportunity to study a second instrument? If you are interested in jazz as well as classical music, does the school offer courses, or even better, performance opportunities in jazz? How many performing ensembles does the school support? Are you required to participate? In how many and how often? In many schools musicians who have achieved international reputations serve as faculty members, guest professors, or occasional visitors who conduct seminars, group discussions, and master classes. Who has been associated with the school you are considering?

Schools offer a variety of different degree programs, and this may be an impor-

tant factor in your selection process even if you know that you want to be a performance major. In addition to the Bachelor of Music degree in applied music, many schools also offer degrees in music education, music theory, music history, music therapy, fine arts or general music, arts administration, or ethnomusicology. The opportunity to take classes in some of these departments may be an important option for you, especially if you are interested in a back-up career alternative if performance doesn't work out. Or you may just want to increase your own knowledge and take elective courses that interest you. Some schools have renowned departments in such specialized areas as third-stream music or jazz. In some universities you may have the option to design your own major, have a double major in two music departments, or combine a music degree with a course of study from another department. The broadness of a given curriculum and the diversity of course offerings may well be a factor in selecting a school.

The section at the end of this article lists music schools held in particularly high esteem by professional musicians throughout the country. These are not the only schools where you can get a performance degree. There are dozens of schools we did not list, and your high school guidance counselor or your music director should have information on them. Take particular note of the financial aid and scholarship opportunities. According to admissions officials at many schools, there are often vast monetary resources available that no one applies for because they don't know about them. Many schools have extensive financial



aid offerings, and scholarships are also available through local and state boards and music societies. Don't hesitate to ask questions.

### **Polishing and auditioning**

The application process varies according to school, but all have a multitude of steps to fill out and an audition. Each school has its own repertory requirements, so you will have to check with each one before planning what you will play. If you are still unsure of exactly where you want to apply, you would be wise to begin polishing up possible audition pieces. Most schools ask that you perform pieces from at least one of the four major periods: Baroque, Classical, Romantic, and Contemporary. In addition, you may be asked to play a certain type of piece from a specific period or even a particular piece. Sometimes students are expected to be able to demonstrate technical exercises, including arpeggios, scales, or scales and arpeggios in all possible keys and inversions. Don't wait until the last minute to prepare. A professor who has played in recitals all around the world is not likely to be impressed by rusty technique or a half-learned piece.

The audition can be a nerve-wracking experience, especially if you aren't experienced in contests, auditions, or recitals. You probably won't finish anything you prepared. Most schools only allow a certain amount of time for each audition, and the judge will want to hear you play a little of everything you've prepared. Don't be surprised when the head of the audition committee claps his hands or raps on a table to stop you just before your favorite

part and asks for your next selection. On the other hand, don't count on the fact that you will be stopped before the coda or cadenza you haven't completely mastered. While some students have been known to get away with this gamble, it can prove to be disastrous.

An alternative to the personal audition may be to send a tape. School policies vary on tape-recorded auditions, and some schools send audition committees to major cities around the country so an applicant does not have to pay travel expenses to ten different states. These auditions begin in December or January and continue until February or March, so now is a good time to begin your serious practicing. In some cases, the taped audition is a preliminary screening, and the applicant is invited to audition personally if there is a good chance of acceptance. In other cases, a taped audition is accepted in lieu of a personal appearance.

### **On campus**

You've passed through the auditions, you've chosen a school, and you're packing to leave home. What comes next? The first thing you should do is forget—forget quickly—that you were the best flutist, pianist, drummer, or singer in your high school. So was everyone else you are going to meet. One freshman at a major university music school said, "My piano teacher gave me a piece that was considered really difficult by friends of mine in high school. I was really impressed with myself until I walked through the practice room corridor and heard four or five other students practicing it at the speed of light.



I guess you have to stop thinking of yourself in terms of others because there is always someone who has just finished memorizing the piece you've just started. You have to set your own goals and then work as hard as you can."

Working as hard as you can is a subjective goal. There is no magic formula for how much you have to practice. Factors that will affect your practice time include the demands of your academic work (which vary from school to school), your teacher's recommendation, your instrument, and the availability of practice rooms. Some schools require you to sign up for practice time, particularly if you are a pianist or an organist. Few serious performance majors would own up to practicing less than three or four hours a day. Occasional lapses are unavoidable, but the rule is, if you are a music major, you will be spending more time in class, lessons, and practice than in your dorm.

The ability to schedule your time wisely and stick to your plans is important. One harried flutist complained, "I have to finish learning this solo for a concert next week, so I've been missing classes to have time to practice. Now I'm two weeks behind in music theory, and when I walked in to take my Russian literature midterm, the professor asked if I was in the right class." A clarinetist at another school had a similar story. "I have to take piano this quarter, and that's taking a big block of time. Ear training also requires practice. I'm in the orchestra, and I have papers and listening assignments. I barely have time to practice. I'm just grateful that I don't have a job on top of all this."

### Perform, perform, perform

One suggestion for achieving your career goal seems to be universal: perform as much as possible. On-campus opportunities may include ensemble work, accompanying, chamber music, master classes, participation in campus productions, student organization shows, and the climax of your undergraduate career—a solo recital. Taking advantage of as many of these opportunities as possible will give you a good introduction to the problems of performing and preparing your music for others to hear. You may learn how to deal with nervousness, and you might even get over that first memory lapse, if you haven't already. One violinist described her first performance examination, "We have juries at the end of each semester, and this was the first time I had to play for a panel of professors. All I could think of was that these people had played all around the world, and they knew every note I was playing. Try to play the violin when your hands are shaking. Talk about a vibrato . . . Well, I was doing O.K. until I got to a slow spot, and then I relaxed because I figured I'd gotten through the difficult stuff. The music was technically a lot easier, and all of a sudden I couldn't remember what came next, or what I had just played."

Often how much performing you do is your own choice. Schools have different performance requirements, which may include one or more solo recitals and participation in a certain number and type of performance ensembles. One student commented that performing in front of peers was a stimulating and challenging experience. "Like many other schools, we

a department performance class that meets in the recital hall once a week. All students in the department and their teachers get together, and the students perform for each other. I think that music students are probably the most critical audience there is because they know the repertoire and they can hear every slip, or they can disagree on your interpretation." Teachers often encourage their students to perform for each other, and in many schools, a group performance class of several students will be a part of your schedule.

Much of what you learn will be through playing and performing with other music students. One cello major commented, "Working in an environment where everybody is so serious is very inspiring. Through people I've met in school, I've had the opportunity to perform concertos, chamber works, orchestral parts, duets, and solo pieces."

Coming in contact with faculty artists, teachers and guest performers is another aspect of a good music curriculum. Many schools sponsor master classes with guest artists who spend a period of time visiting the department as an artist-in-residence. Master classes give students a chance to perform a complete work uninterrupted by a teacher. Then a discussion of interpretation points and technical suggestions follows to the benefit of both the student and audience.

Contests provide another opportunity to perform, although some teachers feel that the repertoire demands of a contest may not be in a student's best interest at a given time. In addition to monetary awards ranging

from \$50 to several thousand dollars, contests provide the opportunity to try out new repertoire, and some offer performances as awards. The number of contests in the United States has increased dramatically in the last several years, and many young artists enter them in the hope of using them as springboards to a concert career.

Music students often take advantage of community and local professional performing organizations. The Chicago Civic Orchestra, for example, is known as "the training ground for the Chicago Symphony Orchestra" and is largely comprised of talented music students who are interested in careers as symphonic musicians. A violist who spent a year performing with the Civic Orchestra said, "We had rehearsals conducted by famous guest conductors, including Sir George Solti, the conductor of the Chicago Symphony. Performing in the Civic was one of the best musical experiences I've ever had. We covered so much repertoire. Between Civic and the other orchestras I've been in, I've played through all of the Beethoven symphonies and through much of the standard repertoire, including many of the piano and violin concertos. This means that I'm already familiar with many of the works I will be encountering in my career. I've also improved my sight-reading."

Sometimes the biggest problem in studying music on the college level can be trying to take advantage of all the opportunities, especially if your school is located in an area rich in concerts and musical resources. Being successful requires that you set both long-term and short-term goals,

and stick to them. Decide which concerts to attend, what performance opportunities to seek, which repertoire to learn, and when you're going to write that paper on Gregorian chants. Make decisions well in advance, and stick to your schedule. There is nothing more frustrating than missing a performance of your favorite sonata by a world-renowned musician because you put off your counterpoint homework until the last minute.

### **After college—what next?**

One common option is to go to graduate school. This is because many musicians aspire to a position as an artist-teacher at a university where they can teach, do research, and develop a performance career. Other students decide not to continue their education, or to take a break, at least for a while. Many find jobs teaching, either in a school, or privately, and spend the rest of their time auditioning or practicing. Some students support themselves by taking a series of temporary jobs as studio musicians or playing for parties and community organizations. Those who have performed extensively during college have the best contacts for these jobs. Other students take any kind of work they can find to pay the bills until they find a position with an orchestra. Sometimes these stop-gap jobs may have nothing at all to do with music.

While professionals may differ as to what percentages of talent and hard work are required to turn an aspiring student into a successful performer, few will deny that often a healthy share of old-fashioned good luck can make or break a career. The suc-

cess stories of many famous conductors among them Zubin Mehta and Arturo Toscanini, were often helped by a frantic telephone call saying that the scheduled conductor was sick and a substitute was needed. If you've worked hard and developed your talents to the best of your ability, when your big break comes, you'll be able to do the job, too.

### **Which music school is the best?**

A difficult question, that probably can't be answered with any certainty. Two studies attempted to rate U.S. colleges department by department, including the music school. One was the Ladd-Lipset survey, which asked faculty members to rank schools (indicated by \*). Another is the Blau-Margulies survey, which asked deans of colleges to list the top schools in each area (indicated by a +). [Ladd-Lipset Survey: "The Well-Known Universities Lead in Rating of Faculties' Reputations," *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, January 15, 1979. Blau-Margulies Survey: "The Reputations of American Professional Schools," *Change, The Magazine of Learning*, December-January, 1974-75. There are many other fine music schools not included here, but the results of these two surveys may be a starting point for compiling your own list.

Some form of financial aid is available from all the schools, including grants, loans, and academic or performance achievement scholarships. Because tuition figures given are for 1980-81, you should expect an increase for the 1981-82 school year.



*is Institute of Music*, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. The Institute is housed in a building in Philadelphia. The 170 undergraduates have access to concerts of Philadelphia Orchestra with many of orchestra members being on the school's faculty. To be considered for admission, a candidate should be younger than 21. The school is completely endowed which means there is no tuition. It is a music performance institution and students do not take courses in other academic areas. +

*Eastman School of Music*, 26 Gibbs Street, Rochester, New York. The Eastman School, part of the University of Rochester, is located in downtown Rochester and includes a new five-story main building, four auditoriums, the library, and practice halls for both graduate and undergraduate students. Shuttle buses connect these facilities with the main University of Rochester campus, located three miles away. The Rochester metropolitan area has a population of nearly one million. Music performances include concerts by the Rochester Symphony and by visiting artists. There are approximately 408 undergraduates and 250 graduate students. Many receive financial aid. Tuition: \$100/year. Application deadline: February 20.\* +

*Indiana University*, Bloomington, Indiana. With 1085 undergraduates and 660 graduate students, I.U. has one of the largest music departments in the United States and supports five symphony orchestras, plus numerous other large and small ensembles.

The University plays an important role in local cultural, artistic, and performance activities. The nearest large city is Indianapolis, located about a one and a half hour drive from Bloomington. Tuition is \$31 per credit-hour for in-state students and \$76 per credit-hour for out-of-state students. About 25% receive some form of financial aid. Application deadline: March 14.\* +

*Juilliard School*, Lincoln Center, New York, New York. Juilliard provides a rigorous performance-oriented curriculum (a limited number of liberal arts courses are offered) for students who are expected to devote most of their time to their major instrument. In addition to the Juilliard School's performances and ensembles, students can take advantage of Lincoln Center's vast resources. Buildings in the complex include the Metropolitan Opera House, the New York State Theatre, Alice Tully Hall, Avery Fisher Hall, the Museum and Library for the Performing Arts, and three additional recital halls for use by Juilliard students. Tuition: \$3250 per year.\* +

*Northwestern University*, Evanston, Illinois. Evanston is the first suburb north of Chicago, so students have access to the city's musical activities. The faculty includes several members of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra. Students at Northwestern generally take one course per quarter outside the School of Music in order to fulfill general academic requirements. There are approximately 350 under-



graduates and 200 graduate students in the School of Music. Tuition: \$5415 per year. 65% of the students receive financial aid. Application deadline: February 15.\*

*Oberlin College Conservatory of Music*, Oberlin, Ohio. Oberlin College is divided into two schools, the College of Arts and Sciences and the Conservatory, and students take courses in both divisions. A flexible program enables students to study two or more instruments in which they are proficient and to perform in student, junior, or senior recitals. There are 480 students in the Conservatory at the undergraduate level. The college dominates the city and provides most of the artistic opportunities open to students. Tuition: \$4924 per year (1980). 46% receive some form of financial aid. Deadline for application: March 15.\* +

*University of Illinois, Champaign-Urbana*, Illinois. A large state university located about three hours by car from Chicago, the University dominates the two cities and provides cultural opportunities and visits by guest artists. In addition, a strong emphasis is placed on student performances. The music department has about 500 undergraduates and 300 graduate students. Tuition: \$458 per semester for in-state residents, \$1092 per semester for out-of-state students. 16% receive some form of financial aid. No specific deadline, but January and February are suggested.\* +

*University of Michigan, Ann Arbor*, Michigan. The School of Music is one of 19 schools that comprise the institution. Students can take courses in both the School of Music and in other divisions of the University. The University plays an important role in local community and cultural affairs. Although the university is very large, the population in the School of Music is limited to about 525 undergraduates and 320 graduate students. Tuition: \$550 per semester for in-state students, \$1700 per semester for out-of-state students. 30% receive financial aid. February 15 application deadline.\* +

*University of Southern California*, Los Angeles, California. The school has one of the most comprehensive music programs on the west coast. It is a private university that has about 400 undergraduates and 100 graduate students. In addition to those activities sponsored on campus, students can take advantage of living in a large metropolitan area. Deadline for admission: May 31. Tuition: \$4300 per year.\* +

*Yale University*, 435 College Street, New Haven, Connecticut. Located in the medium-sized city of New Haven about two hours north of New York City, the music department is small, with only 160 undergraduates. Some majors are not offered at the undergraduate level. Students take courses in other departments as well as music. Deadline for admission: January 10. Tuition: \$6000.\*

## David Del Tredici

Charles Suttoni

*Musical America*, September 1980

One evening last April David Del Tredici was working in seclusion at Yaddo, artists' colony, when he was startled by knocking on the door. Opening it he found six colleagues bearing a bottle of champagne and the news that he just won the Pulitzer Prize for *In Memory of a Summer Day*. While awards and prizes are new to the trim, forty-seven-year-old composer, the Pulitzer came as a "wonderful" surprise. "It was a particularly bad work day, so I was ecstatic," he says in his lively articulate manner. "*In Memory of a Summer Day* had just been accepted in late February by the St. Louis Symphony, which had commissioned it. I finished it and then left immediately for San Francisco to begin work on my piece for the San Francisco Symphony. So neither it, nor the prize, was really in my thoughts." Del Tredici, even now, seems to regard the prize and its implications lightly, quipping, "my mother loved me more for it, my colleagues less" as he talked affably in his spacious live-in studio in Manhattan's Greenwich Village. "In terms of the piece," he continued, "*In Memory of a Summer Day* is very iconoclastic. It's beautiful Romantic. It's more harmonic or tonal than *Final Alice* [his big success of 1976] and the prize makes the writing of exclusively tonal music legitimate nowadays."

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In this sense the prize vindicates or at least recognizes the direction he has been taking.

Born in 1933 in California, Del Tredici began his career as a pianist, one with a special fondness for Schumann: "What I always liked about Schumann was the quirkiness, especially of his early pieces—his giving them names and a kind of programmatic element." Graduate study at Princeton, "a hot-bed of atonality," followed in the early 1960s and proved a disquieting experience: "It was just too much, this huge prestigious university, with the wonderful teachers all implying that there was only one way to compose, which was a way that really didn't interest me." Nonetheless, he did compose settings for James Joyce texts—notably *I Hear an Army* (1964), *Night Conjure-Verse* (1965), and *Szygy* (1966). Although tonal at heart, these pieces were overlaid with "a scrim of wrong notes, a haze of atonality," as he put it, to make them acceptably modern to his fellow composers.

In the late 1960s, however—much as Schumann had discovered Jean-Paul—Del Tredici discovered the works of Lewis Carroll, the Oxford mathematician who immortalized eight-year-old Alice Liddell in *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* and its sequel *Through the Looking-Glass*. Since then he has been dipping into them for texts more or less as his imagination dictates. "Carroll forced me into a kind of tonality," he confesses, "because his whimsy and cheerful humor just couldn't be atonal. I also liked his combination of mathematics and whimsy. The story sounds nice but there's something a little peculiar

about his images. And then you read in a footnote that this is a retrograde of that, or some complicated mathematical theorem translated into childhood fantasy. It's kind of nuts. An artfully nutty thing that appealed to me because I like to use the tight, severer disciplines of music, things like retrograde and palindromes. They aren't supposed to have expressive value—you really don't notice them—but they do create their own energy, and I very much like the energy of exactitude mixed with natural expressiveness."

The *Alice* pieces started in 1968 with *Pop-Pourri*, followed by *The Lobster Quadrille* written at Aaron Copland's request (1969, rev. 1974), *Adventures Underground* (1971), *Vintage Alice* (1972), *In Wonderland* (1969–74) and *Illustrated Alice* (1969–75). Then, with the Bicentennial, came the Chicago Symphony's commission for the seeming coda of the series, *Final Alice*, a forty-minute extravaganza for amplified soprano, folk group (saxophones, mandolin, banjo, accordion), and orchestra presenting the trial scene from *Alice*. The piece hit the press in a big and enthusiastic way as it made its rounds of the major orchestras.

The *Final Alice* commission also put a truly large performing group in Del Tredici's hands for the first time, and he used it to the hilt, even to the point of checking out the number of horns and trumpets available before composing the work. "I always like to gild the lily," he notes with a grin. "I like to load on many lines, so that my piece is just teetering on the brink of excess but hopefully never going over. I get into a lot of trouble for that because the piece is

almost impossible to play. I like excess, only in the service of a kind of abandon expressiveness. In that sense I'm a real Romantic."

As it turned out, however, *Final Alice* was not the coda; the prize-winning, hour-long *In Memory of a Summer Day* followed, opening a new chapter in Del Tredici's continuing fascination with Carroll and Alice. It is the first, preintermission part of a new, evening-long work that he calls *Child Alice*. In three sections, *In Memory of a Summer Day* begins with a setting for soprano and orchestra of Carroll's poem "Child of the pure unclouded brow," the preface to *Through the Looking-Glass*, as seen from the child's point of view. The colossal March that comes next introduces a new element in the Del Tredici cum Carroll fantasy: it presents a "tone poem" that Carroll told Alice but that somehow never got written down—"A story that got away," Del Tredici says. *In Memory of a Summer Day* concludes with a second setting of the poem but seen this time as colored by Carroll's own complex feelings toward the little girl.

Next in the new series comes the independent *Happy Voices*, another story that got away. It will have its premiere September 16, conducted by Edo de Waart at the San Francisco Symphony's inaugural gala for their brand-new, \$38.5 million Louise M. Davies Symphony Hall, the city's newly commissioned and American piece on the program. Completed this past July, *Happy Voices* is a lively, self-contained fifteen-minute orchestral work that bears out Del Tredici's fondness for severer disciplines: "It's a real fugue throughout," he



ins, “very contrapuntal and very colorful and with a very odd subject that starts with a long-held note and then a very quick thing. That’s all. It’s one of those far-away subjects that’s not a melody but a musical event that has no meaning, not in how it’s spun out.” Following its premiere, the San Franciscans will take the *Voices* on tour.

All this, Del Tredici still has one more commission to go, this one from the Ormandy and the Philadelphia Orchestras. Much like *In Memory*, it will be a setting of one text, “All in the afternoon,” the preface to the first book of *Alice*, and promises to bring the *Alice* evening to a luxuriant conclusion when it is first performed next May. Although the doctrinaire Princeton brand of atonality and serialism has abated these days, Del Tredici harbors a faint, lingering concern about his work: “Somehow it

seems morally wrong to get appeal through tonal means.” He needn’t fret, however. With great energy and flair he has worked out his own amalgam of tonality and atonality, exactitude and expressiveness, excess and restraint—artful nuttiness. Most critics have been enthusiastic about the *Alice* pieces and audiences have cheered the sonic blockbusters in the concert hall. Recordings are another matter: only a few early works—none of the *Alice* group—are available. But Solti and the Chicagoans have recorded *Final Alice* and perhaps the record will be released this coming spring. As for the future, Del Tredici would like to finish setting all the poetry in the first book of *Alice*, and he has had a long-standing interest in the works of writer William Burroughs. If, then, the Pulitzer prize hasn’t made much of an apparent difference in Del Tredici’s life, it’s for the best of reasons—he’s been far too busy composing.

## John Lennon's Last

by Mitchell Cohen

*High Fidelity*, February 1981

### John Lennon & Yoko Ono: Double Fantasy

John Lennon, Yoko Ono,  
& Jack Douglas, producers  
Geffen GHS 2001

In a calamitous turn of events too fraught with sadness and irony for the heart to bear, "Double Fantasy" has gone from John Lennon's longed-for musical re-emergence to his last recorded testament. What sounded a few weeks ago like a man's too-complacent statement of tranquility now can only be heard in the dark context of tragedy and in the blazing light of an unparalleled career.

To listen to John's voice on the Beatles' Hamburg tapes of 1962, the Decca demos, the "Please Please Me" album, is to witness the fabric of rock music being torn to shreds and rewoven by a very young man with conquest on his mind. Later songs as diverse as *It Won't Be Long*, *You Can't Do That*, *Help!*, *Every Little Thing*, *Any Time at All*, *Don't Let Me Down*, *Rain*, *Instant Karma*, *I'm a Loser*, *Jealous Guy*, Side 2 of "Rubber Soul," and almost everything on "John Lennon/Plastic Ono Band," show how he changed rock singing and composing as dramatically as Brando changed screen acting and with the same emotional intensity.

We saw John Lennon more naked than any other modern star; no one was more unafraid of image-risks, of going to far. Every step the Beatles took forward, for good or ill, was guided by John. When last they were quartered, he embarked on a crusade that shocked and embarrassed much of his audience, confused many ears, and resulted in work that was distressingly erratic, but always marked by honesty and humanist integrity. If Lennon was too susceptible to dubious characters like the Maharishi and assorted yippies, he was also a very public person eager to use his influence to shake up things that needed

He retreated, he accumulated wealth and property, he raised a son. Then, he was coming back; expectations were high. The single that preceded "Double Fantasy," (*Just like*) *Starting Over*, was a typical droll, wonderful Lennon tease, from the Presley vocal mannerisms and the pun implied in the title ("Just Like" = "J.L.") to the corny piano and background vocals and the definitively hummable melody. His legendary trash-pop instinct was clearly operating at 45 rpm.

The album, unfortunately, isn't quite as good. After five years inside their household, John and Yoko brought their dialog out of doors, expecting it to engage us. They were so wrapped up in their homelife, so rapt in attentiveness toward each other and their child, that "Double Fantasy" doesn't even acknowledge any other humans except those who would question the couple's self-imposed isolation. This album is not what a Lennon admirer might have chosen as an artistic epitaph. On it, a well-adjusted musical craftsman, an artist who

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capacity to startle, addressed his own  
 al condition and found that it was  
 ine, thanks.  
 t complaining about its limited vision  
 s not only inappropriate, but mean-  
 ed. For though only sentimentality  
 d rank it with his finest work, one  
 fault the familiar abrasion of *I'm*  
*g You*, the oriental delicacy of *Beau-*  
*Boy*, John's warm singing on  
*hing the Wheels*, the mea culpa ballad  
*an*, the crisp New York City  
 ence or even Yoko's dance-rock con-  
 tions. "Double Fantasy" bows to  
 s past (copping from Buddy Holly on  
*Yoko*), nods towards Lennon's own  
 phrasing *Cry Baby Cry* on *Cleanup*  
 ), and details his life in the Dakota.

As such, it leaves us with questions about  
 Lennon's possible musical future, ques-  
 tions we thought he'd have the next forty  
 years to explore. "Double Fantasy"  
 sounds like a step, not a stop.

From the days before the Beatles landed  
 in America, until the news that caused so  
 many tears and nightmares, their every  
 move as a group and as individuals was a  
 matter of concern to us. Now something is  
 gone that is irretrievable; someone of im-  
 measurable importance has been ripped  
 from us. John Lennon was almost always  
 overwhelming, in his audacity, passion,  
 ego, directness. Now we have been over-  
 whelmed by him once more, with grief and  
 with gratitude for a life that permanently  
 marked and altered our own.



## North by Northwest. Original Film Score by Bernard Herrmann.

by Paul A. Snook  
*High Fidelity*, February 1981

London Studio Symphony Orchestra,  
Laurie Johnson, cond. STARLOG/VARESE  
SARABANDE SV 95001, \$15 (digital re-  
cording) (distributed by VARESE  
SARABANDE).

This long-awaited release, appearing some twenty years after the film, completes the trilogy of the most inspired scores Bernard Herrmann wrote for Alfred Hitchcock—the others, of course, being *Vertigo* (Mercury SRI 75117) and *Psycho* (Unicorn, out of print). *North by Northwest* has some of the former's Romantic exuberance and the latter's spine-tingling asceticism, and like most of Herrmann's output, it exemplifies the creative enhancement of a film narrative through the meshing of visual and aural images. The complementary response of Herrmann's restive genius to the more cold-blooded genius of Hitchcock resulted in music that not only fits the film integrally and enhances its impact, but for the most part stands on its own as valid musical expression.

From the outset the *Northwest* music imposes its dynamic persona with an arresting main title in a throbbing, swirling fandango rhythm that threatens to go out of

control. Herrmann was such a painstaking craftsman in matching his ideas to the exact needs of each scene that many of the subsequent cues are brief, economical, and frankly episodic variants of the metrical and intervallic characteristics of this generative principal theme. Except for a plaintive, *Tristan*-like love theme—also inventively woven into the score's dramatic evolution—these somewhat bare and fragmentary, tension-producing passages, with their repeated-note patterns and insistent sequential modulations, occasionally make for neutral and even uneventful listening on the purely musical plane. Paradoxically, they testify to Herrmann's integrity as film composer first and foremost. Perhaps as a result of his early training in scoring radio drama, he often eschews the more traditional symphonic elaborations of a Korngold, Rózsa, or Waxman, and confines himself, like a musical jeweler, to small-scaled, detailed reworkings of his deliberately elementary and malleable basic materials. This is all the more remarkable in view of the exceptional capacity for long-breathed lyrical phrases and large gestures he displays in such concert works as the symphony and the cantata *Moby Dick*.

Another crucial facet of his personality, repeatedly illustrated here is his faultless sense of timing, as evidenced by a stalking, low-key humor in an ironic and macabre mode paralleling Hitchcock's own. *Northwest* is also replete with examples of his precise mastery of the dynamics of sonority, encompassing the full range from *fff* tutti to the highlighting of just one or a few instruments, sometimes in orthodox registers or combinations.

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t it is during the extended “Mt. more” section of the film’s close that Mann puts his permutational skills through their most spectacular paces in a of symphonic apotheosis, bringing all e separate motivic elements together incrementally tautening and terrifying . It climaxes in the groundswell of a held dissonant chord (in some ways nister matrix of all that has gone be- which is deftly passed up through various sections of the orchestra while mpani gambol ominously neath—a gesture that provides at a e both uncanny musical unity and onal release. e result of a new collaboration be- a Varèse Sarabande and *Starlog* mag- , this realization is well-nigh impec-



cable. Using what sounds like a handpicked orchestra, Laurie Johnson demonstrates a real affinity for the workings of Herrmann’s muse; he never rushes or overdelineates but permits the music to build naturally to its breathtaking peaks. And the digital recording techniques—once you heed the recommended adjustments in volume level—impart an X-ray kind of clarity and freedom from distortion right into the inner grooves, all the while virtually eliminating any subliminal awareness of hearing a reproduction instead of an actual performance. In spite of its inflationary price, this issue commands the attention of anyone even minimally interested in the dramatic uses of musical imagination.

## Braille Music Forum: Braille Repeats

by Bettye Krolick

Braille music notation attempts to reconstruct the print music score as closely as possible. The use of repeat signs is one exception. In print music the section to be repeated is usually enclosed by repeat signs, the beginning of the section indicated by two vertical bar lines followed by two dots one above the other, and the end by the two bar lines preceded by two dots. Other repeat signs in print music are *Da Capo* (*D.C.*), which means that the piece is to be repeated from the beginning to the end or to a place marked *fine*, and *Dal Segno* (*D.S.*), which means to repeat, not from the beginning but from another place marked by a *Dal Segno* symbol. Print music normally will not employ repeat signs for one or two measures, the repeated measures being written out in full instead. Braille transcriptions, on the other hand, include all print repeats plus signs to indicate repeats for one or two measures and even parts of measures. These repeats, which are found only in braille music, are called *braille repeats* and are by far the most common deviation from attention to print music reproduction. This departure from the practice of faithfully reproducing print music began early in the history of braille music and has remained consistent through other changes in print versus braille details.

At the first international conference on music braille held in Cologne in 1888, all of the repeats described in this article as well as the modifications of these repeats were enumerated. Because measure numbers were not included in the braille music of that time, the lower-cell numeral repeat was not shown; however, the braille segno repeat was, and it achieves the same purpose. After 1900 the philosophy of braille transcription moved toward greater attention to print detail. In 1929 clef signs were officially added to the international code of braille music, although clef signs do not affect the reading or performance of braille notes; and, at the Paris conference of 1954 there was a great emphasis toward providing print details for blind teachers of sighted pupils. Some facsimile transcription from that period even include a *t* in parentheses placed at every other change of the page, the point at which the print page should be physically turned so that two pages could be viewed by the sighted performer. Since the 1960s the philosophy of facsimile transcription has moderated with some countries including more print detail than others. Most countries now rarely include clef signs, but all include print page numbers and some of the other details omitted at the Cologne Conference. Since then braille repeats have been added and used in all types of music transcriptions in spite of increased attention to print details.

Braille repeats facilitate reading and memorization, providing the musician understands the signs. For example, a measure may begin in the third octave and contain 21 cells of braille representing a passage of chords rising in a complex arpeggio. If the next measure contains dots   4-6, 2-3-5-6, the knowledgeable reader is immediately able to continue.



another measure of the same notes beginning two octaves higher and continuing to rise  
ch. The memorization of that second measure will be simple indeed. A reader who  
not understand the braille repeat will lose the continuity of the passage and will not  
in easy answer by asking a sighted friend to describe the print music. The two meas-  
described above will be notated similarly in that the pitches (and rhythm) will be  
ted. But since pitches in print music are indicated by the position of notes on the lines  
paces of the staff, the sighted musician looks for higher pitches on higher staff lines, a  
ple not followed in braille music.

There are many different braille repeats, but they can be organized into three groups:  
single-cell repeat character, repeats using upper- and lower-cell numerals, and braille  
signs (or signs). After explaining these, I will describe the modifications applicable to  
them.

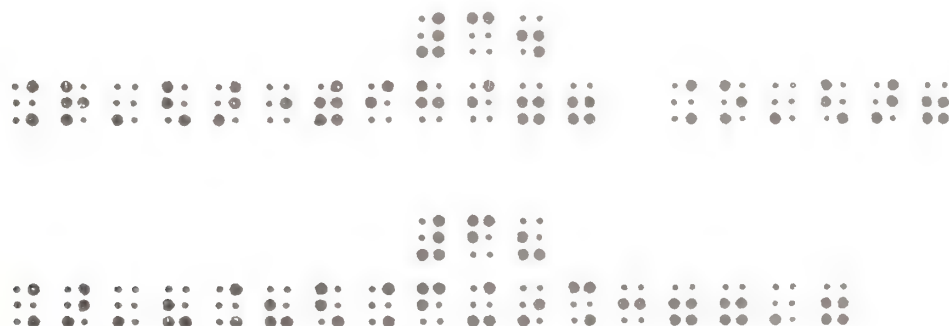
## Types of repeats

### Single-cell character

A single-cell repeat character consisting of dots 2-3-5-6 is either a whole or a part-measure repeat.  
If it appears within a measure, it is a part-measure repeat; if it stands apart, it means  
repeat the previous measure.

A part-measure repeat indicates the repetition of music that precedes it within the same  
measure, unless it is associated with an in-accord sign. If the repeat is the only music  
character before or after an in-accord sign, it means to repeat the corresponding part of the  
preceding measure. More commonly, the character indicates the repetition of a chord, a  
portion or other portion of the measure in which it occurs. To determine the length of the re-  
peat, count the beats before and after the repeat and compare that count with the time sig-  
nature. If there are two or more repeat signs in the measure, all are the same length unless  
a numeral appears between them. In that case, the repeat following dot 3 is of longer duration.  
If a numeral follows a part-measure repeat, it indicates the number of times to repeat with-  
in the measure. These points are illustrated below.

Example 1.



(c)



Example 1a is in 3/4 meter. The first part-measure repeat sign is found after the in-accord sign, in the lower voice part, after one beat of sixteenth notes grouped together. The second repeat sign follows immediately, so it is of equal duration, and each repeat represents one beat of four sixteenth notes to make three beats for that in-accord part. In the second measure the melody changes to D, and the repeat sign after the in-accord sign indicates that the entire in-accord part of twelve sixteenth notes is the same in the second measure as in the first. Examples 1b and 1c are in 6/8 time and show two ways of writing the same music. In 1b a four-note chord is followed by two repeat signs, so the chord is played three times. Then a dot 3 appears followed by another repeat sign, so that repeat sign has a new, longer duration. In this case the final repeat sign represents three more chords in order to finish the measure of 6/8 time. In 1c, the same four-note chord is followed by a single repeat sign and the numerical five indicates that the measure contains six identical chords. In both cases the measure contains six eighth note chords, each of which should be played staccato and accented. The repeat includes the expression markings of other details as well as the notes.

When this same single-cell repeat character stands apart, it signals the repetition of everything in the preceding measure with the exception of a tie, if one appears at the very end of the measure. The single-cell character may be preceded by modifications as shown later. If the measure is to be repeated more than once, a numeral follows the repeat sign immediately. This is usually an upper-cell numeral with a number sign, but occasionally, in older transcriptions, a lower-cell numeral without a number sign is found. Example 2 shows two ways of telling the performer to repeat the preceding measure three times.

Example 2.



## *Upper- and lower-cell numerals*

An upper- or lower-cell number at the beginning of a paragraph or parallel of music is section, rehearsal, stave, or measure number, but a single number or unspaced number within the body of a paragraph, parallel, or section of music indicates a braille repeat. Since some numbers are in the standard, upper part of the cell, some are in the lower part of the cell, and some combinations include both upper- and lower-cell numerals, it is important to distinguish and understand the meaning of each kind.

ually, upper-cell numerals refer to counting a number of measures, and lower-cell numerals indicate specific measure numbers. It is also important to notice whether the first number is larger or smaller. If larger, it indicates the number of bars to count back to the beginning of the repeat, and the second number tells how many bars are to be repeated. If the first number is smaller, it is the measure number of the beginning of the repeat, and the second number is the measure number at the end of the repeat. Example 3 illustrates these points.

Example 3.

Count back and repeat the last four bars.

Repeat measure 4.

⠠⠠⠠⠠

Count back four bars and repeat them (less common form).

⠠⠠⠠⠠

Count back eight bars and repeat five bars beginning at that point.

⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠

Repeat measures 8 through 12.

⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠

Repeat measures 8 through 12 (unusual form).

Combinations of upper- and lower-cell numerals may be found in music written in paragraphs or sections. The first number refers to the section in which the repeated measures are indicated, and the numbers that follow specify which measures from that section should be repeated. If the first numeral is in upper-cell position, those that follow are in lower-cell position and vice versa. The two repeats in Example 4 have identical meanings: repeat measures 1 through 8 of the first section of the composition.

Example 4.

⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠

General repeats, like single-cell repeats, include everything except the final tie at the end of the repeated section, if a tie is present in the original.

### The segnos

As stated earlier, braille segnos accomplish the same goal as lower-cell numeral repeats: they provide for the repeat of a specific group of measures. The braille segno, dots 3-4-6, is identical for braille and print segnos, but if the sign appears in the braille copy only, it



is followed immediately by a letter. The first braille segno is followed by *a*; subsequent segnos, if present, are labelled *b*, *c*, etc. (A print segno is never followed by a letter.) The segno appears at the beginning of the passage to be repeated. It is always preceded by space, so it cannot be mistaken for the sign to indicate the interval of a third. The end of the passage to be repeated is marked with dots 1-6 found at the end of a measure. The reader notes the beginning and the end of a segno passage and then watches for the sa

segno sign preceded by a dot 5. The sign  (dots 5, 3-4-6, 1) indicates the place

where the measures beginning with  $\begin{smallmatrix} \cdot & \cdot \\ \cdot & \cdot \end{smallmatrix}$  (dots 3-4-6, 1) and ending with  $\begin{smallmatrix} \cdot & \cdot \\ \cdot & \cdot \end{smallmatrix}$  (dots 1-2-3-4-5-6) should be repeated. Sometimes the sign preceded by dot 5 is also followed by a number confirming the number of measures in the repeated passage. Whether or not a number is given, dots 1-6 signal the end of the repeated section.

## Modifications of repeats

All of these repeats may be modified by other common music signs. If a passage is the same except that the notes are in a new octave, an octave sign appears before the repeat (single-cell character, numeral repeat, or segno). The repeat then starts in the octave indicated and proceeds accordingly. In the example mentioned with a passage of chords rising in a complex arpeggio, the repeat (dots 2-3-5-6) was preceded by dots 4-6 (fifth octave). Since the original measure began in the third octave, the repeated measure began two octaves higher and continued at that distance. Another type of modification is dynamic marks, or words, abbreviations, and signs that indicate degrees of volume. If a passage is repeated, except that it should be played *forte* instead of the original *piano*, the new dynamic mark is found immediately before the repeat character or numerals. Modifications are much less common before segnos, but if an octave sign or new dynamic mark is present, it applies to the repeated passage. Other possible modifications for repeats include slurs and pedaling signs. In general, if any common music signs appear unspaced before any braille repeats, the new signs replace their counterparts in the original passage as the repeat is performed. Other than these replacements, everything in the original passage should be observed with the exception of a final tie. Example 5 shows numeral repeat with modifications. It is for the right hand and is in 3/4 meter.

Example 5.



In the above example, a two-note chord is played *forte* and is tied over to the next measure but no further since that single-cell repeat sign does not include the final tie. Those two measures are then repeated *mezzo-forte* instead of *forte*, and the top note of

is in the fourth octave rather than the fifth as it was originally. The same two measures again repeated, but this time they are played one octave lower and at the *pianissimo*.

### Conclusion

This review has been designed to clarify and sharpen music reading skills by increasing awareness of repeat signs with their meanings and possible modifications. If you have further questions about repeats, or if you find some that do not fit my classifications or descriptions, I would be most interested to know about them. Please remember that your comments and questions will not appear for several months, due to the lead time required for printing the *Musical Mainstream*. It is my hope that I hear from many of you so that this can truly be a forum about, for, and from braille music readers. Send material for this column to Bettye Krolick, 602 Ventura Road, Naperville, IL 60563.

# New Music Materials

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The following works are available on loan from the Music Section, National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C. 20542.

Braille and recorded materials may also be purchased from their respective producers. Large-print scores are available on loan only. These listings show, where possible, composer, Music Section catalog number, title, print publisher, and producer.

Materials in the music collection are available on two-month loan, renewable upon request.

## Sources

**HC.** Handcopied braille; available only on loan from the Library of Congress

**RNIB.** Royal National Institute for the Blind, 224 Great Portland Street, London, W1N 6AA, England

**SNB.** Regione Toscana—Stamperia Braille, Istituto Nazionale dei Ciechi "Vittorio Emanuele II," Via Aurelio Nicolodi n. 2, Postale n. 5/1257, Firenze 50131, Italy

**VFB.** Verein zur Förderung der Blindenbildung e.V., 26 Bleekstrasse, Hannover-Kirchrode 3000, West Germany

## Braille

### Scores

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 26157  
 s SNB

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**ion Music**  
**t, William**  
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**l sonatinas, op. 37 and 38**  
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e, op. 14 BRM 26403

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ni, Giuseppe

o from Sonata, A major

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nd Piano Music, Arranged

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Meister für Junge Spieler

26401

VFB

ewski, Ignacy Jan

et from Humoresques de Concert,

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and Bock VFB

, Hans

ertino, op. 70, A minor

26475

orth VFB

ertino, op. 93, A minor

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berg VFB

Svendsen, Johan Severin

Romance, op. 26, G major

BRM 26344

publisher undetermined VFB

Vivaldi, Antonio

Concerto (L'estro Armonico, no. 6)

BRM 26437

Schott VFB

Wagner, Richard

Am Stillen Herd from Die Meistersinger

von Nürnberg BRM 26439

Vogel VFB

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## Books on Braille Music Notation

Following publications about braille notation are loaned or sold by the organizations listed. Prices are current as of April 1974. The American Printing House for the Blind and the National Braille Association accept orders with advance payment from individuals. Since prices are subject to change, purchasers should confirm prices before ordering.

**AH** American Printing House for the Blind, Inc.  
P.O. Box 6085  
Louisville, Kentucky 40206  
(502) 895-2405

**NA** National Braille Association  
422 Clinton Avenue South  
Rochester, New York 14620  
(716) 232-7770

**S** National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped  
Library of Congress  
Washington, D.C. 20542  
(800) 424-8567

**Stipes** Stipes Publishing Company  
10-12 Chester Street  
Champaign, Illinois 61820  
(217) 356-8391

De Garmo, Mary. *Introduction to Braille Music Transcription*. Washington, D.C.: Library of Congress, 1970.

**Formats:** Print and braille

**Availability:** Print supplied by NLS Braille Codes Section to braille music students; braille loaned by NLS Music Section to other interested persons.

Print and braille sold by APH; the print publication sold by APH includes the 1974 *Addenda* listed below.

Print catalog no. 8-7596, \$11.25

Braille catalog no. 6-7596, \$32.80

De Garmo, Mary. *Introduction to Braille Music Transcription: Addenda A-C*. Washington, D.C.: Library of Congress, 1974.

**Formats:** Print and braille

**Availability:** Print supplied by NLS Braille Codes Section to certified braille music transcribers and to transcribing students; braille loaned by NLS Music Section to other interested persons.

Print and braille sold by APH.

Print catalog no. 8-7594, \$1.45

Braille catalog no. 6-7594, \$1.70

*Index of Braille Music Signs*. Louisville: American Printing House for the Blind, 1971.

**Formats:** Print and braille

**Availability:** Print and braille loaned by the NLS Music Section. The *Index* is not available for sale.

Jenkins, Edward W., comp. *Braille Music Chart*. New rev. ed. Louisville: American Printing House for the Blind, 1960.

**Formats:** Print and braille

**Availability:** Print and braille loaned by NLS Music Section. Print and braille sold by APH.

Print catalog no. 7-1719, \$1.85

Braille catalog no. 5-1719, \$4.45

Jenkins, Edward W., comp. *Primer of Braille Music*. Louisville: American Printing House for the Blind, 1960.

Jenkins, Edward W., comp. *Primer of Braille Music: 1971 Addenda*.

Louisville: American Printing House for the Blind, 1971.

**Formats:** Print and braille

**Availability:** The 1960 and 1971 publications are loaned in print and braille by the NLS Music Section.

The *Primer* and *1971 Addenda* bound together are sold by APH.

Print catalog no. 8-0135, \$4.80

Braille catalog no. 6-0135, \$5.55

Krolick, Bettye. *Dictionary of Braille Music Signs*. Washington, D.C.: Library of Congress, 1979.

**Formats:** Large-print and braille

**Availability:** Print and braille free for deposit in U.S. libraries or for use by persons eligible for NLS program. Print copies available on loan to other persons in U.S. Neither print nor braille editions are sold.

Krolick, Bettye. *How to Read Braille Music*. Champaign: Stipes Publishing Company, 1975.

**Formats:** Print and braille

**Availability:** Print and braille loaned by

the NLS Music Section. Print sold by Stipes; braille sold by NBA.

Print price \$2.00

Braille price \$2.50

Spanner, H. V. *Lessons in Braille Music*. Louisville: American Printing House for the Blind, 1961.

**Formats:** Print and braille

**Availability:** Braille only available on loan from NLS Music Section. Print and braille sold by APH.

Print catalog no. 7-6887, \$3.75

Braille catalog no. 5-6887, \$16.00

Spanner, H. V. *Revised International Manual of Braille Music Notation, 1956 (American Edition), Part I, Western Music*. Louisville: American Printing House for the Blind, 1961.

**Formats:** Print and braille

**Availability:** Print and braille loaned by NLS Music Section; print and braille sold by APH.

Print catalog no. 8-0548, \$9.00

Braille catalog no. 6-0548, \$37.80

Spanner, H. V., comp. *Revised International Manual of Braille Music Notation, 1956 (American Edition), Part I, Western Music: 1975 American Addendum*. Louisville: American Printing House for the Blind, 1975.

**Formats:** Print and braille

**Availability:** Print and braille loaned by the NLS Music Section. Print and braille sold by APH.

Print catalog no. 8-0547, \$1.50

Braille catalog no. 6-0547, \$6.00



## Profile of an Orchestral Pianist: Behind the Scenes at Carnegie Hall

Tom Darter and Bob Doerschuk  
*Contemporary Keyboard*  
April 1981

ed behind the grand piano, off to one  
in a sea of woodwind, string, and per-  
son instruments, Elizabeth Wright  
ds much of her time listening to the or-  
tra around her make music. She counts  
sures off as they pass by, notices the en-  
es of the various sections, and finally  
poses herself and fixes her gaze on the  
uctor as her *raison d'être* on the partic-  
evening draws near.

ll of a sudden there's a space in the tex-  
of the music, as if the waters of sound  
parted momentarily, and the piano is  
d to life. For a few seconds it's a solo  
t against an orchestral backdrop for  
beth Wright, the entire keyboard sec-  
of the American Symphony Orchestra.  
musicians, the conductor, everyone in  
udience now shift their attention to one  
umentalist, perhaps for the first time in  
rogram. The piece, whether by  
insky or an early Baroque master,  
s in her hands until the piano interlude  
ludes, the full ensemble leaps back in,  
Wright, letting loose a deep breath,  
es.

ch is the duty of the orchestral pianists,  
spend most of their time in concert tick-

ing off the moments until their head-first  
dive into some crucial keyboard passage.  
The scenario was very much like this at  
Carnegie Hall on Sunday, November 9,  
1980, when the ASO performed a program  
of Aaron Copland works to commemorate  
his eightieth birthday. The only difference  
was that the composer himself was there too,  
conducting and listening to Wright tackle the  
piano part to his *Short Symphony*, one of the  
tougher keyboard puzzles in Copland's cata-  
log. Neither he nor the audience was disap-  
pointed.

Despite the number of works written for  
orchestra with pianist—as opposed to con-  
certos for orchestra with piano soloist—only  
a handful of full-time orchestral pianists are  
working today. Zita Carno, for example, is a  
salaried member of the Los Angeles Philhar-  
monic Orchestra, unlike Elizabeth Wright  
and most other keyboardists who work regu-  
larly with a particular symphony orchestra,  
but are paid per performance.

Once upon a time, though, in the distant  
days of pre-Romantic music, keyboard  
players were integral parts of the orchestral  
fold. Italian opera composers of the late six-  
teenth century scored for prototypical en-  
sembles that featured harpsichords, along  
with flageolets, zinken, and other exotica.  
Monteverdi's *Orfeo*, written in 1607, called  
for *four* keyboard parts—two harpsichords  
and two organs with wooden pipes. But by  
Haydn's time, the keyboard had faded in im-  
portance. Conductors traditionally sat behind  
their harpsichords (later replaced by pianos),  
where they alternated between leading the  
musicians and filling in on the keyboard  
where required. With the apex of Romanti-  
cism under Wagner, the lure of the spotlit



podium became irresistible, and the piano quietly disappeared from normal orchestral instrumentation.

Is the modern orchestral pianist a throwback, then? Only in the best sense of the word; like ensemble keyboardists of the past, Wright and her equivalents must know how to blend inconspicuously or soar out above the ensemble, whichever the composer requires. But the technical demands faced by orchestral pianists nowadays are far greater than those confronted by their ancestors, in terms of dexterity as well as understanding of a staggeringly broad repertoire.

"Anybody who's a successful orchestral player has to be a very well-rounded musician," Wright insists. "It's very different from just playing alone. You have to be able to listen and fit in, and you have to know a great deal of music, not just the piano repertoire. Basically, you have to have all the skills of any other orchestral player, although you need to have the temperament both of a chamber musician and of a soloist, because you run into things like [Stravinsky's] *Petrouchka*, which has certainly a big solo part.

"In any event," she adds, "you have to love playing in an orchestra. I've always loved any kind of ensemble playing. Being onstage in the middle of all that sound is wonderful."

*Keyboard* went to New York to observe Wright and the ASO rehearsing the Copland program two days before it was presented, and to speak with the people there who could give us the clearest picture of what it means to be a modern-day orchestral pianist.

**Friday, November 7. Carnegie Hall is vir-**

**tually empty, except for a few jour-**  
**milling around the floor, a group of**  
**ten music students peering down through**  
**the diffuse light from the balcony, and**  
**members of the ASO, who are gathered**  
**informally onstage. Their coats and**  
**instrument cases are piled over the seats**  
**the first four or five rows. It's early**  
**morning, and rehearsal is about to**

"The American Symphony Orchestra organized in 1962 by Leopold Stokowski who was then 80 years old," states Aaron, general manager of the ASO since 1972. "Every musician at that time was conditioned personally by him. He was particularly interested in recruiting and finding many of the younger students who come from the conservatory to a major orchestra very easily. And he did a lot of wonderful programs to encourage the players to have a grasp of all repertoire under his leadership. It was quite inspiring for all, and that's still with us today."

Stokowski led the orchestra until 1962; at that time Elizabeth Wright had signed on as the resident pianist. Raised in a small town in upstate New York, she took her first piano lessons at age five, polishing on studies at Monmouth College in West Long Branch, New Jersey, Juilliard, and in Europe. From the beginning she was more interested in accompanying rather than becoming a soloist; in that sense, her background for work with the ASO was ideal.

"It was quite an extensive audition," she remembers. "Unlike the usual audition, where you play excerpts of pieces, I had to play several solo works for him, and he personally conducted me in one of them, the M

easy in D Minor, K. 397, to see how I could follow a conductor, since most pianists are not used to doing that. He had very interesting ideas about it; in fact, they were quite bizarre. I don't know whether it was to see if I could follow him, or whether they were in fact his own ideas. It might have been either."

The celebrated conductor died in 1977, and his words still adorn the orchestra's publicity sheet, reminding present-day readers of his resolution "to offer concerts of great quality within the means of everyone" and to afford opportunity to highly gifted musicians, regardless of age, sex, or national origin, through the auspices of the ASO.

Members of the orchestra are gathered on the Carnegie Hall stage. True to Aaron Copland's dream, a significant number of them are younger than the average symphony musician, and many are women—including the concertmistress—from minority groups. At 9:30 Arthur Aaron stands up to make a series of announcements: where and when the next rehearsal will be, when the buses will come to carry them to the next concert. At 10:00 the musicians begin tuning to the concert. Two minutes later, Aaron Copland is introduced. He strides to the podium, formally dressed and accompanied by a stagehand carrying the score to his *Short Symphony*. Elizabeth Wright and her fellow artists await the composer's first beat.

The *Short Symphony* has a tricky piano part because of the rhythm changes and because the piano frequently doubles the

flute," Wright explains. "I'm not very close to the flute, so I not only have to try to watch and be with him, but to watch the conductor and be with him too. This means that I have to know the flute part, as well as the piano part, very well, so I worked on it for several weeks before the rehearsal.

"Sitting in the back creates another problem," she adds, "in that you have to judge when the instrument is going to be heard in the audience. The strings will sound a little later than the piano if they play on the same beat, so you have to make allowance for that. This is why you'll frequently hear orchestral pianists who stick out a bit or come a little ahead."

Wright also feels it's important to have the piano part memorized by the day of the concert. "The problem is that you've got to have your eye on the conductor," she notes. "In Piston's *The Incredible Flutist*, for example, there's a little piano cadenza. You're playing along, then when you get to the top of the run, you suddenly have to look up and follow the conductor's beat. It changes the whole tempo, so you can't watch the keyboard. To add to this, the piano is way in the back. When I play with Martha Graham's dance company I'm right in front of the conductor because the piano parts are so crucial in so much of her music, but when you're off to one side in an orchestra, the whole visual angle is different. I try to practice at home looking up and pretending there's a conductor over there."

ASO general manager Arthur Aaron expects that all orchestra members, including the pianist, will go over their parts at home before rehearsals begin. "If they have any pride I certainly would think that they'd



come prepared," he insists, "especially when rehearsals are limited because of the cost factor. You just don't waste any time while one member of a section tries to find what notes they're expected to play. With the number of orchestras coming through New York, every concert is like an audition; you have to sound your best."

Programs for the upcoming ASO season are mounted in the orchestra's office in early September, and players are encouraged to sign out their parts for advance study. Wright usually goes one step further: "I not only get the piano part, but I also get a full orchestral score," she says. "It's kind of a joke in my section because I always have the score, but I need to know when the piano part is important if I don't know the piece, or when it's a solo part. And if we're doing something I haven't played before I always try to listen to a recording of it as well."

The actual rehearsal schedule is worked out by the conductor, although for budget reasons the pieces requiring the largest orchestration are generally rehearsed first so that idle musicians won't have to be paid for standing around while the smaller selections are being worked out. At this particular rehearsal, however, the two large-scale pieces of the Copland concert, the *Short Symphony* and the *Lincoln Portrait*, conducted by Leonard Bernstein with Copland narrating, were the bill of fare.

**Following a ten-minute break, the orchestra tunes up again at 11, then Bernstein, garbed in a flowing cape, makes his entrance. Copland, who will read the narration to his *Lincoln Portrait*, sits to one side**

**as Bernstein mounts the podium. The differences between the conducting styles of the two men immediately become evident. Where Copland's approach was more relaxed, with only slight suggestions at certain parts of the score, Bernstein starts the piece after only a few introductory notes and begins a long process of dissolving rough spots with a perfectionistic impatience. "Every musician in America knows this piece," he declares. "When have you been playing all this time?" A little more than an hour later, the exhausted players pack up and break for lunch. Copland has been observing the procedure silently; his entrance as narrator had not even been reached.**

In the *Lincoln Portrait*, Wright was confronted with a much less challenging keyboard part, consisting of only a few notes on a celeste, but in a different sense than in the *Short Symphony* it was as trying a passage to play. "You sit and you wait and you wait and then you have to play only one or two notes when nobody else is playing," she explains. "If you don't come in at the right place, you're in trouble and everyone knows it. It's very nerve-wracking."

"The keyboard player really does spend a lot of time sitting around and waiting," she muses. "Usually you play one or two pieces in a concert; it's very rare that you play each work. There are two sides to this story. You don't play the whole rehearsal, but you're paid for the whole rehearsal, and what you do play is usually very difficult and important, so it kind of evens out."

There are other duties that the orchestral pianist must face from time to time. Oc

ally Wright has rehearsed with featured soloists for concerto performances, playing sections of the orchestral score. And, frequently, she has been called upon to play other keyboards—smaller harpsichord, for instance—or even non-keyboard instruments. “I’ve had to play on every part of the piano, inside and out,” she laughs. She has even blown whistles. We’re doing a performance of Anderson’s *Typewriter Concerto* for a children’s concert this week, and I was asked to play the typewriter part. In the end, I gave it to a percussionist. And we recently did Strauss’ *Salome*, and I had to reluctantly practice the celeste part to get the feel of the instrument.”

Like most other symphonic players, Elizabeth Wright works at other musical jobs when not rehearsing or performing with her orchestra. She has worked with the American Composers Orchestra in New York, with various ballet troupes, and with the Aspen (Colorado) Festival orchestra during summers. Additionally, she is practicing several concertos and planning to make her debut recital as a soloist later this year or in 1982. Not even so, she retains a special fondness for her work with the ASO, partly because of the opportunity it offers her to work directly with people like Copland. “It was a

wonderful experience to do the *Lincoln Portrait* with Bernstein and Copland,” she says. “I’ve worked quite a bit with Mr. Copland. I’ve done *Appalachian Spring* with him a few times, and he really knows what he wants. If he doesn’t get it, he works until he does. I don’t know where he gets the energy; he just works nonstop. And it was very interesting for me to hear the orchestration of the *Emily Dickinson Songs*, because I did them a few weeks later accompanying a soprano. Because of the ASO concert, I could try to imitate the orchestration on piano. It was an interesting—and a moving—experience.”

**Sunday, November 9.** Aaron Copland, Leonard Bernstein, a sell-out audience, and the American Symphony Orchestra gather at Carnegie Hall for the long-awaited Copland birthday concert. *Keyboard’s* correspondent shares a box with composer Lukas Foss and other dignitaries. From this vantage point, it is easy not only to hear every note of the ASO’s inspired performance, but to look past the conductor and over the heads of the upstage players, where Elizabeth Wright, drinking in the music with the rest of us from her post behind the piano, smiles and awaits her entrance.



## Heitor Villa-Lobos

by Randall Bush

*The American Music Teacher*

February–March 1981

Heitor Villa-Lobos once said, "I consider my works as letters written to posterity without waiting for a reply."<sup>1</sup>

This Brazilian-born composer of over 2,000 works is one of the most musically sincere artists of this century. It has only been twenty-two years since Villa-Lobos' death in 1959, yet few of his compositions are still being performed today. I believe that Heitor Villa-Lobos' works deserve greater prominence and should be considered an important part of contemporary recital repertoire.

Born in 1877 in Rio de Janeiro, Villa-Lobos was first formally introduced to music through his father, Raul, who taught him to play the cello. Raul encouraged young Heitor by exposing him to the music of the European composers, especially the works of Puccini and Wagner. However, when Villa-Lobos was just eleven years old, Raul died of malaria. Noemia, Villa-Lobos' mother, did not approve of his musical pursuits and her lack of support coupled with economic hardships prevented Villa-Lobos from receiving any formal music training.

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Mr. Bush, a junior at the University of Kansas, is the recipient of a Rotary International Scholarship, under the terms of which he is currently studying at the Mozart Conservatorium in Salzburg, Austria.

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When he was sixteen, Heitor ran away home and began traveling through Brazil's hinterlands, playing with groups of local musicians. It was during this period, full of journeys and adventures, that Villa-Lobos was exposed to the immense wealth of folkloric and musical material available to the native Brazilians.

Villa-Lobos made his first trip to Europe in 1923, after receiving financial help from the government and some close friends. Once in Paris, he became popular with concertgoers and eventually stayed there for eight years. When he did return to Rio de Janeiro, Villa-Lobos was named Director of Musical Education in Brazil. He established a "Professors' Choir" of music teachers so that they could teach their students more effectively. Also, Villa-Lobos made music a compulsory subject in all schools. Since he believed that every child could learn how to sing, choirs were stressed over school orchestras. However, Villa-Lobos was faced with the obstacle that the majority of Brazilian school children could not read music. To solve this problem, he first taught the students *solfège* and how to sing intervals using these syllables. Then Villa-Lobos invented a system known as "orpheonic concentration," which consisted of hand signals for a moveable "do." The five fingers of the hand in raised position represented do, re, mi, fa, and sol, with the first three fingers lowered being la, ti, and do.<sup>2</sup> With this system, entire choirs could sing without written music, but by following the conductor's directions. Villa-Lobos conducted choirs through intricate *a cappella* pieces he often improvised while directing. He even di-

the outdoor concerts, with as many as 100 school children singing.

Villa-Lobos first visited the United States in 1943, when he received an honorary doctorate degree from New York University. He traveled around the country; and from that time on, Villa-Lobos returned almost every year to conduct or receive awards. It was really the United States that propelled Villa-Lobos into international recognition as a pianist and composer, because his performances led to having various organizations and orchestras commission new works from him. In the next decade, Villa-Lobos toured extensively and received many prestigious honors; however, his health began to worsen. Returning to his home in Brazil, Villa-Lobos died on November 17, 1959 at the age of 72.

Although he was not an accomplished pianist, Villa-Lobos was an exceptional composer of piano music. He composed over 100 pieces for solo piano, plus another 22 chamber works for piano with orchestra or chamber group. When he was 21 years old, Villa-Lobos had his first piece published, titled "Salon Waltz." Many of his early chamber works were similar to that waltz, being simple in form, yet not mature in terms of style. It wasn't until 1914 that Villa-Lobos began writing important piano compositions, starting with his three "Afro-Dances." These pieces were his first works based on native themes. It was also at this time that the guidance from his wife, Lucilia Guimaraes, began to show in his pieces. Lucilia was an excellent pianist who had been teaching at the National Institute of Music in Rio de Janeiro when she met Villa-Lobos. She taught him about

piano techniques and how best to utilize the keyboard, becoming the first interpreter of his compositions.

In 1918, Villa-Lobos composed *Prole do Bebê No. 1*. Entire books could be written on the significance of this set of pieces, for they represent the beginning of his nationalistic style and his truly mature works. *Prole do Bebê*, "the Baby's Family," consists of eight short pieces, each representing a different type of children's doll. Yet, not only does each one describe the physical characteristics of each doll, such as the fragility of the "Porcelain Doll" or the flexibility of the "Rubber Doll;" each piece also describes what kinds of children own the dolls, whether they like their toys or not, how old they are, even suggesting the economic situation of their families. This suite has been popular since its first performance in 1922, when Arthur Rubinstein played it in Rio de Janeiro. One of the pieces, "Polichinelo," has been used by Rubinstein for many years as an encore number. Teachers and students alike can appreciate the creative rhythms and harmonies used in these pieces.

There are many other worthwhile piano compositions by Villa-Lobos, yet a problem arises in that less than half of these works are still in print today. Some fine pieces still being published are: the *Brazilian Cycle* of four pieces, notably "Festa na Sertao" (Jungle Festival); the series of *Cirandas*; *Alma Brasileira* (also known as *Choros No. 5*); and *Rudepoema*, which was composed as a musical portrait of his friend, Arthur Rubinstein. Villa-Lobos also wrote several pieces for piano and orchestra, including five piano concertos.



The two series of works by Villa-Lobos which have gained the most acclaim are his exceptional *Bachianas Brasileiras* and *Choros* series. The nine pieces in his *Bachianas Brasileiras* set each claim inspiration from the music of J. S. Bach. Villa-Lobos once said that there were only two great composers, "Bach and I,"<sup>3</sup> and he felt that Bach's music was a universal folkloric source for all countries. The name, *Bachianas Brasileiras*, is one of Villa-Lobos' own invention, illustrating how he has taken Bach's contrapuntal and harmonic ingenuity and coupled that with the excitement of Brazilian melodies and rhythms. The best known works in this series are *Bachianas Brasileiras No. 2* for chamber orchestra, and *Bachianas Brasileiras No. 5* for soprano solo and eight cellos. Secondly, there are the 15 pieces in his *Choros* set. This format is also totally original Villa-Lobos for he created serious music by blending together all of the elements of his native Brazil—the jungles, mountains, Indians' songs, and even the carnival noises. A "Choro" resembles the improvised and highly virtuosic music of the Brazilian street musicians. The majority of these pieces are arranged for orchestras or chamber ensembles, and they are generally quite complex, such as *Choros No. 13* for two complete orchestras and military band. These two series represent some of the finest Brazilian music ever written.

Biographers and reviewers have always thrived on classifying musicians into neat, descriptive categories. Heitor Villa-Lobos has been identified mainly as a folk-music composer, a label he sought to dispel. Villa-

Lobos himself explained that folk music only come directly from a land and its people. His music is in the folk style, using these native themes and idioms in his original way. It is interesting to note that Villa-Lobos doesn't even claim to "arrange" folk material; for the verb he chooses is *ambientar*, which means "to provide an atmosphere."<sup>4</sup> These explanations, however, are much too general to properly describe the exotic beauty and charm of Villa-Lobos' music. He was able to transfer onto paper an almost savage keenness of sounds and colors, surrounding them in an atmosphere of unrestrained primitivism. He considered himself an "atonal neo-primitive,"<sup>5</sup> a term describing just how his music is totally saturated with native culture. Winthrop Sargent, a reviewer for the *New Yorker* magazine has said that "... trying to analyze Villa-Lobos' music is like trying to analyze a torrent one is swimming in. The listener is borne along so rapidly on a torrent of changing ideas that he has scarcely become acquainted with one idea before it is swept into another. Nearly all the ideas are highly original, and the torrent is refreshingly so." "It is essential to realize that Villa-Lobos' effective use of native elements could not have been possible without a complete mastery of modern theory and compositional technique. He argued that "... to simply make a pot-pourri of folk melodies and believe that in this way a new music has been created, is hopeless."<sup>7</sup>

Lastly, a descriptive adjective that has always been attached to Villa-Lobos' pieces is that they have an impressionistic flavor. This is a seemingly logical assumption. Considering the early 20th century was the era of im-

ism and that Villa-Lobos was in Paris in the 1920s, amid the “Big Six” French composers of that time. One reviewer of an early concert of Villa-Lobos’ music even wondered if his pieces were not really some lightly-composed works by Debussy. This comparison between the French impressionism and his unique, Brazilian style irritated Villa-Lobos. However, he did frequently employ such elements as the whole-tone and atonic scales, modal harmonies, and the technique of planing. Planing is an impressionistic technique where each chord tone progresses in parallel, fixed-interval motion. In “Aulatinha” (Rubber Doll), from Villa-Lobos’ *Prole do Bebê No. 1*, two types of planing can be found. Exact planing occurs in each chord in a progression is of the harmonic type, such as a minor chord with an added minor seventh, as in Example 1a. However, if the progression moves chromatically, or diatonically, the chord types change, as in Example 1b.

Example 1a.



Example 1b.



It should not be concluded that Villa-Lobos was just an impressionistic composer either, for many other styles were equally influential in his music. Such traditional idioms as ostinato patterns, pedal points, and seventh chords were used almost to excess to create excitement, coupled with the hammering of unresolved seconds purely for percussive effect. Villa-Lobos’ melodies were often short, with a great flexibility of key, resembling the native songs; while his rhythms were complex and often involved the mixture of several patterns, as is common in African music. Brazil’s history and culture resembles a patchwork quilt, bringing together many diverse forces into a totally unique design, and Brazilian music—or to be more specific, Villa-Lobos’ music—best represents this colorful, diversified culture.

Villa-Lobos was always outspoken during his lifetime because he truly believed in his works and their value. Critics continually ridiculed his lush orchestrations and uncompromising rhythms; however, this never deterred Villa-Lobos. He felt that critics were useful; they don’t let one get careless. As Vasco Mariz describes in his biography of Villa-Lobos, what charms us most is the purity and vigor of his inspiration. His was not a mechanical skill but one of invention and vitality, completely without convention. Villa-Lobos was a musical genius; a genius by the prodigious richness of creation and the immeasurable musical talent which flowed from his pen.<sup>8</sup> Music was Villa-Lobos’ lifework, and his compositions have earned the undeniable right to be performed today. Truly, they deserve to be heard.



## Notes

<sup>1</sup> Opera News Vol. 42. December 10, 1977, p. 28.

<sup>2</sup> Modern Music Vol. 22. October-November 1939, p. 17.

<sup>3</sup> Music Review Vol. 4. 1943, p. 34.

<sup>4</sup> Compositores de América Vol. 3. 1957, p. 5.

<sup>5</sup> Newsweek Vol. 49. April 8, 1957, p. 56.

<sup>6</sup> New Yorker Vol. 33. April 6, 1957, p. 142.

<sup>7</sup> Machlis, *Introduction to Contemporary Music*, 1979, p. 422.

<sup>8</sup> Mariz, *Villa-Lobos: Life and Work*, 1970, p. 28.

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## End of an Era

During his lifetime, Rossini witnessed a dramatic change in the art of singing, as virtuosity fell into decline

by Stefan Zucker

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During the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, castratos occupied the central position in the opera world, inherited in the early nineteenth century by sopranos and tenors. Indeed their supremacy was even greater, for they not only dominated opera performance but ran schools of singing and conservatory voice departments, and they were the chief pedagogues of all Italian-trained singers, neutered and unneutered alike.

In 1855, late in life, Rossini observed, "Their artistry was all that those people could have, so they devoted the most assiduous diligence and untiring care to their training. They always turned into able musicians, and when their voices faltered, they were at least excellent teachers."

In 1858 he remarked, "If those who possess the great, true traditions disappear without leaving disciples on their level, their art vanishes, dies. *De profundis!* . . ." In 1860 he told Wagner, "As to the castratos, they

vanished, and the usage [of castrating boys] disappeared in the creation of new custom. That was the cause of the irretrievable decay of the art of singing. . . . Alas for us! The bel canto of our homeland is lost." And in 1866 he declared, "Those mutilated boys who could follow no career but that of singing, were the founders of the 'singing that sensed in the soul,' and the horrid decadence of Italian bel canto originated with their suppression."

The death knell for the castratos' techniques and traditions of vocalism was sounded when the Italian academies where they taught were in most cases closed down during the wars and social unrest of the Napoleonic period. Aspiring singers were thus deprived of what had been their traditional source of instruction. Moreover, owing to the turmoil of the time, fewer people studied singing than before, much as was the case in Italy and especially Germany during World War II. And when the further castration of boys was both abjured and effectively proscribed—in order for it to have the desired result, the operation had been carried out between the ages of six and eight—methods of singing perfected by the castratos stopped being disseminated all but entirely.

When singers had been in the master schools, they had received thorough musical groundings and were able to devise ornamentation and variations for the vocal lines of their roles in accordance with the taste and performance practices of the era, conforming according to the rules governing the harmonic structures of the music they sang. As Rodolfo Celletti has put it in a stimulating article in *Analecta Musicologica*, through the time of Rossini's early operas, "The

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Mr. Zucker, listed in the 1980 *Guinness Book of World Records* as "world's highest tenor," takes part in four AFBC albums to be released, including two Bellini operas. © 1981 by *Opera News*. All rights reserved. Used with permission.



ment of the public on a performer was concerned merely with the virtuoso character of the interpolations but embraced the style, the know-how of the variations." The Italian public of that time knew the way the American public today knows baseball.

During the very first few years of the nineteenth century, cognoscenti became aware of a sudden dearth in particular of singing castratos trained to make careers as opera singers, of whom there had been a constant supply. During the eighteenth century the practice had been carried out on such a scale that boys who had seemed vocally promising, whose greedy parents had accordingly had them castrated, and who had grown up and been found to want aptitude for singing, were a social blight throughout Italy. Sometimes they banded together and roamed the streets as toughs, committing mayhem and victimizing the populace. Composers, impresarios and other musical insiders came to realize that there was a shortage of accomplished singers in general.

By the second decade of the nineteenth century, even some of the most renowned stylistically correct singers apparently had little training in musicianship. The eminent singer and critic Pierre (Pietro) Leoni wrote that "Ansani, the maestro of the orchestra at the Naples conservatory, literally did not know even one note of music. His students were obliged to sing to him and to teach him by memory the piece upon which he wished to have his advice. David the tenor [i.e., the tenor Giovanni David, offspring of tenor Giacomo], Mrs. Pasta and many other celebrated singers were almost in

the same condition." Singers of the day did have certain aids, however, to help them develop facility on their own. Frequently they were coached by the composers whose works they performed. They had living models among older singers, whose formal background was more extensive. And they survived professionally under circumstances where there was a constant turnover of repertory. New music had to be learned in a limited time, and there was a premium on the ability to ornament correctly. Stendhal repeatedly ventured his most effusive encomiums in praise of David's and Pasta's "subtlety of embellishment."

By 1815 Rossini had begun to fear that poorly trained singers, attempting to devise ornamentation and variations as a matter of course, would do so incorrectly. Stendhal in his *Life of Rossini* caricatures the inept attempts of some singers of the day at ornamentation: "Not infrequently a *gorgheggio* [variation or improvisation] will begin lightly, rapidly and in a style reminiscent of the purest farce traditions, only to trail off on a note of tragedy or to immerse itself in a fog of impassioned and unmitigated gloom. Or else the singer, having opened in a strain of severe and unimpeachable gravity, will proceed to discover halfway through that his inspiration has dried up and so will make a wild, desperate plunge into the nonsensicalities of opera buffa."

In 1815, with *Elisabetta, Regina d'Inghilterra*, Rossini began to notate more fully the music he wanted sung in performance. He did so even though he seems to have felt, along with his colleagues, that the same vocal line is not ordinarily equally well-suited to any two different singers, so



that the basic melodic material is best expressible if the vocal line itself is modified to suit the characteristics of the singer who is to give it utterance. According to this view, a judicious singer alters and embroiders a vocal line in order to adapt the underlying melody to his own vocal idiosyncrasies, temperament and technique. Mozart, who espoused this, the then general outlook on the matter, wrote, "I like an aria to fit a singer as perfectly as a well-made suit of clothes." For a composer to write out ornamentation and variations for a singer was thought to be a straitjacketing not merely of the singer but the music.

It may well have been, as Stendhal urges, on account of Rossini's appraisal of the singers' lack of skill at devising ornamentation, that from 1815 on he wrote vocal lines typically more florid than those set to paper by earlier Italian composers, though their music was frequently no less florid as then performed. When in 1862 the painter Guglielmo De Sanctis asked Rossini "why he had introduced so many roulades and other ornaments into his music," he replied, "The motive was simple. . . . Singers formerly did it on their own, in the worst taste. In order to forestall such indecencies, I decided to write them out in a form more suitable to my music." According to Friedrich Lippmann, a German musicologist active in Italy, "Rossini scarcely invented new kinds of coloratura but only tastefully fixed general practice. . . . That which stares up at us so blackly from the score is really only the fixing of an old practice, in accordance with which the melodies of Piccini and Cimarosa were not performed very differently."

Another reason for the greater floridity of

many of Rossini's vocal lines—particularly those composed for operas first heard in Naples between 1815 and 1823—is that florid figurations are an integral, rather than merely an ornamental, part of the melody. Without florid figurations, Rossini's melodies in many instances would fail to cohere. Celletti argues plausibly in "The Origins and Developments of Rossinian Coloratura" in *Nuova Rivista Musicale Italiana* that the integral floridity of many of Rossini's melodies resulted from the way his style matured. This idea is not incompatible with the traditional explanation just advanced. Lippmann maintains in "Toward an Exegesis of Rossinian Style," also in the *Nuova Rivista*, and in his Bellini book that some of Rossini's melodies from this period would be "unthinkable deprived of embellishments—[without them] almost nothing would remain." He speaks of arias with "a precise melodic nucleus." But this is scarcely less true of some of Rossini's earlier works, for instance *La Scala di Seta*. Certain sections in Rossini's pre-1815 operas come near being as florid as anything he ever wrote, for example some usually cut music in Lindoro's cabaletta as well as Mustafà's entrance aria in *L'Italiana in Algeri*, certain things in *Demetrio e Polibio* and others.

It would be wrong to conclude that Rossini was against permitting singers to ornament his music. Not one to repress a whim, he did say to a favorite singer of his later years, Adelina Patti, after she had sung "Una voce poco fa" with too copious decoration the first time she took part in one of his salon musicales, "By whom is this aria that you just have let us hear?" But Sain

ens reported that when Rossini recounted the incident to him a few days later, he allowed, after appropriate fulminations, "My arias must be embroidered—they were made for that." It was *how* they were ornamented that concerned him. Rossini's own arias are exemplified in the ornamentation, his own and of other composers' music, which he wrote for certain singers, some of which he compiled in the second appendix to Luigi Ricci's volumes of variations and cadenzas. Rossini took it for granted even in his later years that at the very least the repeats of the palettas would and should be turned into variations by the performer.

The steps Rossini took very likely initiated the historical tendency of composers to commit more and more of their music to the singer, relying less and less on the singers to devise ornamentation and variations. By 1827 Bellini was restraining Rubini from decorating certain phrases in *Il Pirata*, although Rubini was by most accounts a master both at devising and at executing ornamentation and variations. (Henry F. Chorley, a prominent London critic during the middle of the century, thought Rubini's ornaments excessively repetitive, but Bellini often did let him decorate lavishly.) From about the last thirty years of the nineteenth century on, singers began to be upbraided for making any changes at all in a composer's text, no matter what the stylistic practices had been when the music in question was composed.

From 1815 until he stopped composing for the Italian stage in 1823, Rossini wrote all of his opere serie except *Semiramide* for the Teatro San Carlo in Naples. Crafted for specific virtuosos, with many of the bravura

passages written out rather than left to the singers' invention, these works were foredoomed to infrequent revival, a fact foreseen by Stendhal. In his *Life of Rossini*, written in 1823, he declared, "The scores of Rossini's Neapolitan operas are a biography of voices. . . . The scores make it quite clear that all the embellishments, which singers had hitherto claimed the right to distribute *ad libitum*, had now been transformed into an integral, necessary, *indispensable* constituent of Rossini's music. But that does not solve the problem of how any singer is to perform this music when his voice does not happen to possess exactly the same characteristics as that of [Andrea] Nozzari or David.

"The operas that belong to Rossini's 'second manner' [that is to say, those written from 1815 to 1823]. . . can never recapture the same extraordinary spell they managed to cast in Naples, except when, by sheer chance and on the rarest of occasions, they may happen to be graced by a singer whose voice is a natural medium for exactly the same kind of embellishments best suited to the specific artist for whom the *role* was originally composed, and whose *style* corresponds exactly to his." Were Stendhal writing in our era of many different techniques of voice production, he might well have added "correspondence of singing technique" as a cardinal requirement.

If Rossini had somehow omitted the fioriture and extremes of range and had left the fleshing-out of the melodies to the singers' discretions, the operas could have been given from the 1840s onward only in skeletal form, with little more than the notes on the printed page sung, the way Cimarosa's



*Il Matrimonio Segreto* came (and continues today) to be given. And they would have been as dull as they were plain, for the castratos had done more than teach the ability to ornament correctly. They taught particular singing methods that endowed their pupils with characteristic tonal qualities and tremendous agility and range. With their passing, these attributes rapidly began to vanish.

Sometime before 1830 Rossini concluded that though there were still many singers of fabulous accomplishment, stars of a "beautiful grandeur," within less than a generation it would become almost impossible to find "newly emerged models worthy of comparison with [the singers who were flourishing then]. Alas! time the obliterator will gradually close in over these latter [the newly emerged models]. After which, a few rare nebulae still, here and there. . . . Then no more. . . the final night." (Rossini actually uttered these words in 1858. He claimed, however, he had the same insight thirty years earlier, and that was why he stopped composing opera.)

By the late 1830s what was perhaps the most thoroughgoing though abrupt revolution in the history of singing was approaching completion, and with the generation of singers who had been trained in the first fifteen years of the century retired or nearing retirement, including several prominent tenors, among them Rubini and Giovanni David, there were no longer singers—tenors in particular—capable of singing many of their roles, some written only a decade earlier, such as Fernando in Bellini's *Bianca e Fernando*, with Fs above high C and other vertiginous pitches.

This situation excited comment for a generation. Chorley in *Thirty Years' Musical Recollections* repeatedly returned to the topic, writing of Rossini's *La Donna del Lago*, "The music cannot hope to keep its stage. . . because the art of singing it adequately has all but perished." Even in extolling so great a singer as the tenor Maria, who made his debut in 1838, he said, "In florid music there has been always something wanting; but the art of execution too fair to be lost among men. The singer who can give, in all their fullness and brilliancy the airs of [Rossini's] *Otello*, does not exist. The splendid songs of parade and passion [Rossini's] *Zelmira* are virtually lost, it is too much to be feared, forever." Of *Zelmira* he furthermore declared, "There is small chance of this opera ever being revived. . . because it demands tenor singing the race of which is extinct—commanding brilliancy which it has been, of late, the fashion to denounce, as so much musical frippery." Though Chorley penned these words in 1861, they are summations of articles and reviews he had written throughout his career.

According to various observers, among them Rossini himself, the race in question had by 1861 already been virtually nonexistent for two decades. Relegation to the history books was likewise the fate of the other opere serie Rossini wrote during his "second" Italian period, all of which have two parts of wide range and elaborate *fioritura*.

Chorley again and again emphasized the older Italian methods and traditions almost entirely guttered out by 1849, and that at the same time the supply of Italian singers had dried from a torrent to a stream.

Italian singers have never since regained their former virtually complete domination in international opera.) After 1849, Rossini's florid music was almost always performed in simplified versions, the music of the tenor especially.

In 1860 the Marchisio sisters (the mezzo barbara and soprano Carlotta) were hailed as the last of the Rossini and everyone else as throwbacks to the kind of singer who had reigned supreme until less than a generation before. Their chief vehicle, *Semiramide*, was able to be given only because the tenor part was taken over by contraltos in some productions being peripheral to the plot, was largely omitted in others. When Rossini met them, he declared, "My dear babies, you have brought a dead man back to life!" Due to his advent he had embarked on a large-scale composition for the first time in nearly forty years, the *Petite Messe Solennelle*.

In 1868, Emilio Broglio, minister of public education of the newly formed Italian revolutionary government, wrote to Rossini proposing the founding of a Società Rossiniana to develop "aims and. . . methods of restoration and progress for the musical art," which would then take over from the government the supervision of the government-run conservatories and would remedy. . . grave sterility" by "1. beginning from the beginning the education of singers, a long and very difficult undertaking; [and by] 2. opening the field to young maestros." Broglio lamented that, "Your music, certainly, is alive and immortal; but we are now reduced to this, that it can no longer be heard because there is no longer anyone who knows how to sing it. You yourself, Maestro, would, I believe, fly

ten miles from the city where there was announced, for example, a performance of *Semiramide*, because you would be certain of hearing it lacerate the paternal viscera." Rossini wrote back "expressions of my warmest thanks for the generous and opportune details set forth in Your Excellency's letter, aiming not only to honor the old Pesarese [Rossini himself] but also to raise up again an art that I have so much at heart, and which for centuries was the glory of our Italy." But a few months later Rossini died. And when Broglio's letter was published in Italy, Verdi and Boito denounced the fact that elsewhere in it the minister had scorned all Italian composers other than Rossini. Moreover, some newspaper editorials saw in Broglio's plan a ruse to strip the conservatories of their funding. Ultimately the Società was abandoned.

Rossini's predecessors, like Bellini, Donizetti and himself, wrote operas on commission from specific opera houses where particular singers were engaged and tailored the roles specifically for them. Unlike the bel canto composers, however, the pre-bel canto composers wrote only melodic skeletons, leaving the fleshing-out of the skeletons to the virtuoso singers. These latter completed the music in performance by embellishing it, the bravura passages especially, in accordance with the dictates of their artistry and vocal idiosyncrasies. However, the skeletons themselves typically do not confront the singer with an immense array of technical demands.

As we have seen, the bel canto composers wrote out much more of the music as meant to be sung than anyone had done before. They even wrote out embellishments for



many of the bravura passages. And Rossini and some of his imitators composed in such a way that these embellishments are integral to the melodies, so that when these are stripped of their embellishments they frequently fail to cohere. In order for a singer to negotiate one of these roles, he has to have many vocal and technical specifications in common with the throat for which the role was written, or the role has to be adapted to suit him. (Composers of the period frequently rewrote roles to accommodate specific singers.) As they stand, the bravura passages with their embellishments are unsingable by anyone not specifically trained to cope with them.

Mascagni, Puccini and their contemporaries, as well as Verdi in his later period, did not write for specific singers. Instead they composed for specific voice types—soprano, tenor, etc. And they wrote no bravura passages, so there is no need for vocal lines to be retailored to accommodate the technical capacities of individual singers: any operatically trained singer is able to negotiate the notes of any role written for his voice type.

Most of the different vocal techniques taught in this century do not equip a singer to deal with bravura passages; they are merely techniques of tone production. Through

the early nineteenth century, on the other hand, the technical ability that voice teachers sought to instill was coextensive with the technical ability that instrumental teachers aimed to inculcate. An example is the trill, a technical feat so rudimentary that a few people are able to perform it without voice training. During that period a singer without a trill would have been as inconceivable as a violinist or pianist without one. Since the technical ability common to all operatically trained tenors suffices for any tenor to be able to sing any tenor role in late-nineteenth-century opera, if a tenor is going to sing the literature only, technical ability in excess of the meager requirements posed by these composers is wasted, and he has no practical incentive to develop virtuosity.

From the beginning of the nineteenth century until the late 1950s, the general level of technical proficiency declined. Joan Sutherland then Marilyn Horne, Montserrat Caballé and Beverly Sills and their repertoire succeeded in raising singers' consciousness about what their voices could do. Accordingly the past decade has seen some upswing, but it remains to be seen whether the trend will continue if the Rossini-Bellini-Donizetti revival loses momentum.

## Cowell, Ives and *New Music*

Rita H. Mead,  
*Musical Quarterly*  
 October 1980

*This article is based on my doctoral dissertation: "Henry Cowell's New Music, 1915-1936: the Society, the Music Editions, and the Recordings" (City University of New York, 1978). Excerpts from letters by Henry Cowell are printed by permission of the copyright owner, Mrs. Henry Cowell. Excerpts from letters by Charles Ives are printed by permission of the copyright owner, the American Academy of Arts and Letters.*

There could scarcely have been a more auspicious development in twentieth-century American music than the collaboration of Henry Cowell and Charles Ives in the publication of *New Music*. Cowell's writing to Ives in 1927, asking him to subscribe to his quarterly, was the start of a relationship which was to assure a long life for the publication, a wide exposure for Ives's music, and a stimulating source for America's young avant-garde.

When he founded *New Music*, the thirty-year-old Cowell was at the beginning

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of a new career as a promoter of "ultra-modern" music; Ives, approaching his fifty-third birthday, was at the end of a solitary career of composing works too modern and too complex to be performed or published. They were unlikely partners: Cowell, dynamic, energetic, blessed with an Irish wit and charm, and nourished in the free spirit of California; Ives, in declining health since his first heart attack in 1918, impatient, uncompromising, nurtured in the disciplined climate of New England. Behind Cowell was a life as a musical prodigy and inventor of piano tone clusters played with fists and forearms, with recitals in Europe, and a debut at Carnegie Hall; before him was a promise of success as a world celebrity, performer, lecturer, and founder of the radical New Music Society of California, poised to begin a new venture in publishing. Behind Ives was a traditional Ivy League education and a successful career as an insurance executive, but obscurity as a composer; before him were lonely years while he waited for the musical world to catch up with him.

Although they had neither intellectual nor social pursuits in common, Cowell and Ives shared a passionate devotion to the furtherance of contemporary music and a vivid distaste for imitators of Western European practice. Both were well versed in the difficulties American composers faced when attempting to get their works published: Cowell had turned to European publishers, while Ives had been forced to print his works himself.<sup>1</sup>

With his fledgling New Music Society only two years old, the ambitious Cowell was ready to tackle another daring

experiment—a periodical which would publish not articles about music but the music itself. It was, of course, the kind of venture Ives would enthusiastically support, since its purpose, stated in its first announcement, was to alleviate those inequities American composers had suffered:

There are very few opportunities at present for the modern American composer to publish his works, as publishers are unwilling to risk losing money in such publications. When modern works are published in America, almost no copies are sold. The work is therefore not distributed, and the composer gains no financial profit.<sup>2</sup>

To publicize the *New Music Quarterly*, Cowell embarked on a large distribution of flyers and letters, sending 9,000 flyers to potential subscribers; he also wrote to American and European composers, musicians, and critics, asking them to lend their names to the masthead.<sup>3</sup> He wrote to Ives on July 27, 1927, and enclosed the *New Music* flyer. In the letter, he asked Ives to become a subscriber to “New Music,” to offer some of his compositions “for consideration for publication,” and to allow his name to be listed as a member of the advisory board of the New Music Society.

“There is,” Cowell assured Ives, “no obligation attached to this position. The Society is altruistically favorable to the furtherance of newer ideas in music.”<sup>4</sup>

Ives ignored the request for publication but did agree “to serve in any[way] that I can” and called “admirable” Cowell’s idea for *New Music*, which he described as a “circulating music library via a magazine

of unsaleable scores.”<sup>5</sup> Ives sent four dollars for two subscriptions and probably hinted that he might order more copies, because Cowell, after acknowledging receipt of the subscriptions, added: “Copies of ‘New Music’ are not limited and I shall be delighted if you find you can use more of them later, as you suggest.”<sup>6</sup>

Ives’s subscriptions were two of a total of 594 subscriptions, orders, or requests Cowell received to start his publication. Besides those who paid \$3 for membership in the Society and \$2 for subscriptions to *New Music*, fourteen individuals made special contributions (\$25–\$100); among these were Cowell’s father Harry and his stepmother Olive, society matrons of San Francisco, and Mrs. E. F. Walton, a well-known music patron in New York.<sup>7</sup>

According to his ledger records, Cowell received \$1,048.98 from June 1 to October 24, 1927, and expended \$878.10—\$220 for printing the first issue (Carl Ruggles’ *Men and Mountains*), the remainder for the printing and mailing of announcements and letters and secretarial help.<sup>8</sup> Since the October issue was only the first of four which subscribers were to receive for their \$2, it must have been apparent to Cowell that this would be a shoestring operation. However, he was more than satisfied. In an interview published in the *Christian Science Monitor* the following January, he was quoted as having expected only two hundred or three hundred subscriptions, but, by then, had received over six hundred. “If I can keep them I can do very comfortably,” he added.<sup>9</sup>

But he did not keep them. The reaction to the published score of *Men and Mou-*



was so violent that half of the subscribers canceled (although Ives immediately sent in \$50 for twenty-five more subscriptions).<sup>10</sup> By January, after the printing of the second issue (Dane Smyth's *Paeans*), the *New Music* bank account had dropped below \$100.<sup>11</sup> By this time, Cowell had left California to pursue his performing career, giving lectures and recitals across the country and raising money for *New Music*. While in New York he visited Ives, and together they decided that the second movement from Ives's Fourth Symphony would be published in the October 1928, issue of *New Music*.<sup>12</sup> The two men also agreed on financial arrangements for the edition, arrangements Cowell found necessary to confirm the following November when, after numerous delays, the Ives work was still unfinished, while costs were mounting. "I shall," Cowell wrote Ives, "as we decided in conversation in New York, be pleased to ask you to undertake all extra expenses connected with your Symphonic piece." He continued:

These may be considerable, as the edition is so very much larger than any we have tried, and the whole system of mailing will have to be altered, and the copies sent out flat, and the postage will be very high. The printing will be more than usual also. I believe a number of surplus copies should be printed so you and I can have some on hand, and if you are willing, I think it would be a good idea to send complimentary copies to all conductors of important orchestras that are not our subscribers already.<sup>13</sup>

Four months later, in March 1929, Ives sent a check for \$500 to cover all expenses of the publication.<sup>14</sup>

Throughout 1928, while the Ives issue was being planned and the work engraved, letters between Ives and Cowell show a warm personal relationship developing between them. From Ives there were invitations to concerts (when Cowell was in New York), expressions of interest in Cowell's career, compliments on articles.<sup>15</sup> From Cowell came an energy which gave Ives renewed stimulation and a desire to share with Cowell some of his compositional ideas: "I have you to thank for getting me to get out a couple of old scores which I'd thrown into the discard." Because of comments by Cowell on the "natural part the mechanical or artificial" might play, Ives was looking over his scores again. "In some ways," he concluded, "considering the subject matter they seem quite worthwhile. I'll play them for you next winter."<sup>16</sup>

Although Cowell's letters are more impersonal, mostly about business—*New Music*, the Pan American Association of Composers (a recently founded group to sponsor contemporary music), or his lectures and writings about Ives—they are cordial, often beginning "I am delighted to hear from you" and closing with "heartiest greetings." In between, frequently, are expressions of gratitude for money received or contacts Ives had set up for him. In October 1928, Cowell wrote, "I look forward eagerly to meeting you again in the winter," and Ives responded warmly: "When you come to New York stay with us, not at the hotel."<sup>17</sup> Their music was sometimes

played on the same program. Pianist Anton Rovinsky played Cowell's *Anger Dance* and Ives's *The Celestial Railroad* in Town Hall in New York on November 15, 1928. "Your piece and mine," Ives reported to Cowell, "were the only ones that seemed to get any action out of the audience. Some of them 'on their toes' and some of them 'on their way.'" <sup>18</sup> In January Ives's mother died and Cowell wrote in sympathy, remembering his own mother's death twelve years earlier. <sup>19</sup>

Early in their relationship, Ives supported, idealistically and financially, the many projects which the enterprising Cowell engaged in. When the latter's book *New Musical Resources* (1930) was published, Ives agreed to order all eighty copies which Cowell was expected to purchase and directed that they be sent to specified individuals. <sup>20</sup> Ives also sent money for scholarships to the New School for Social Research in New York, where Cowell was teaching. In December 1930, Cowell wrote to Ives, thanking him for the \$50 he had sent "for the educational bit," saying, "I think that will be a very good beginning in the scheme for propaganda." <sup>21</sup> In January he wrote to Ives about the results of the scholarship contest: six winners, including the composer Wallingford Riegger. "They do not know," Cowell added, "who is responsible for paying for it." <sup>22</sup>

Ives's preference for anonymity was a common theme throughout many of his transactions, and frequently Cowell became the intermediary in parceling out funds. This was especially noticeable during the complex negotiations connected with the Pan American Association, to which Ives

donated heavily. Only the inner circle—Edgard Varèse, Adolph Weiss, Wallingford Riegger, Nicolas Slonimsky, and Cowell—knew of Ives's involvement. The secret was kept so well that conductor Pedro Sanjuán took a work of Ives off a Pan American Association program in Madrid. "He never knew, of course, that you were behind the concert financially," Cowell told Ives. <sup>23</sup>

Ives's generosity extended to many others besides Cowell. One was singer Mary Bell, to whom Cowell passed on \$50 of Ives's money when she performed songs by Ives in Hamburg in 1932; <sup>24</sup> another was composer John Becker, who received \$20 from Ives for a concert in Chicago in 1934. <sup>25</sup> But it was for Cowell that Ives reserved his largest and most long-lasting support. As early as 1932 Ives had decided to establish a trust fund for Cowell. After receiving a formal notice of this from Ives's brother, Moss, Cowell responded:

Thank you very much for sending me a copy of Mr. Charles Ives' provision in his will for a new musical trust fund. He has spoken to me of this, and I understand it very well, and his wishes on the subject.

Cowell's suggestion that it would be better to wait until he also wrote a provision in his own will to provide for disposition of the fund seems, in retrospect, to have been prescient: "... before all three of us die there may come many changes in the situation. . . ." <sup>26</sup>

Ives's generous support for *New Music* began soon after his first meetings with

ell. Even before his first work had published in the quarterly, he had committed himself to the general support of publication. It was Cowell's request for money for the Pan American Association led to Ives's decision. On March 27, 1930, Cowell wrote Ives that the association was preparing a catalogue in which he hoped to include a list of Ives's music. "You asked me some time ago," said Cowell, "whether you could do anything for the Pan American—if you feel like donating something to it financially, it would be of great aid."<sup>27</sup> Ives's response convinced Cowell that his commitment would indeed be large and he wrote excitedly:

The prospect of having some regular backing for New Music and the Pan American Association overcomes me with joyful feeling. The really greatest pleasure in life is to have means to be able to work toward the furtherance [sic] of the general good of the best in new music, for me!<sup>28</sup>

Ives's support was timely. That spring of 1930 Cowell apparently had only Blanche Walton to count on. He stayed at her New York apartment that winter, and, shortly after his return to California, Mrs. Walton sent two \$50 checks, which, according to Cowell (*New Music's* bookkeeper at the time), helped pay the bills for the April issue, leaving a balance of \$19.61.<sup>29</sup> As it turned out, even the Ives money earmarked for the Pan American Association eventually ended up in the *New Music* treasury. Finding that he did not have

enough money for the July issue, Cowell was forced to appeal again to Ives. Of the \$400 Ives had sent for the Pan American Association catalogue, Cowell planned to use only \$125 and to shift the remaining \$275 to *New Music*, which, he stressed, was out of funds and would otherwise have had to be discontinued.<sup>30</sup>

Ives sent Cowell another check for \$75 with a typical Ivesian analogy:

There is one thing certain—in fact two things certain (this sounds like a theosophist)—“New Music” must be kept going—and we will keep it going—if we can't get enough outfielders we'll go through without them and I think before a great while, we'll have the bleachers with us—and perhaps the umpire.<sup>31</sup>

Cowell called the check a “lifesaver,” telling Ives that he now had enough money to print and distribute circulars for recruiting new members. “I feel that I am fortunate indeed,” wrote Cowell “to have found someone who shares with me the feeling of the vital necessity of this publication.”<sup>32</sup>

The pattern had been set. When *New Music's* bills exceeded the funds available, Cowell sent letters to Ives who took care of the deficit:

Cowell to Ives, August 28, 1930:

New Music was just down to nothing financially with the paying the bills of the July issue, but I hope enough will come in before the October issue to pay for it. [Ives sent \$100.]<sup>33</sup>



Cowell to Ives, July 13, 1931:

. . . the July issue was the worst . . . new subscriptions lowest . . . . Can you squeeze \$100 from your budget? . . . consider this borrowed. [Ives responded with another "life-saver."] <sup>34</sup>

Cowell to Ives, November 14, 1931, after hearing about a \$60 deficit in the *New Music* account:

I do not know any details. I am therefore wiring you, asking you to again save us by sending money to California for us. I hate to call on you so frequently, the more particularly because our program this year is as a whole so enormous, and drains you so much; yet you are our only resource! [Ives sent \$100.] <sup>35</sup>

By 1933 Ives had settled into a regular monthly contribution of \$125. <sup>36</sup> And from time to time he would donate special gifts: in August, 1934, he sent "some hundred dollars," which represented an income tax refund; in the spring of 1935 he sent an unspecified amount—"the enclosed just for the General fund or whatever you think. . . ." <sup>37</sup>

Besides contributing to the "General fund," Ives paid for the engraving and printing of all the works by him that were published in *New Music*. They represented Ives's most advanced work—landmarks in American music history:

Fourth Symphony (Second Movement),  
*New Music*, II/2 (January, 1929); re-

published as Orchestra Series No. 1  
*A Set of Pieces for Theatre or Chamber Orchestra*, *New Music*, V/2 (January, 1932); also published as Orchestra Series No. 5  
*Thirty-Four Songs*, *New Music*, VII/ (October, 1933)  
*Eighteen Songs* [recte *Nineteen Songs*] *New Music*, IX/1 (October, 1935)  
*Lincoln the Great Commoner*, Orchestra Series No. 1 (1932); republished as *New Music*, XXVI/2 (January, 1951)  
*Fourth of July*, Orchestra Series No. 1 (1932)  
*Washington's Birthday*, Orchestra Series No. 20 (1936)  
*22 and Three Protests*, *New Music*, XXI/1 (October, 1947)  
*Sonata No. 3 for Violin and Piano*, *New Music*, XXIV/2 (January, 1951)  
*The Gong on the Hook and Ladder* (erroneously entitled *Calcium Light*), *New Music*, XXVI/4 (July, 1953)

The publication of Ives's works involved endless months of agonizing effort for all parties concerned—Ives, Cowell, the engraver (Herman Langinger), and the printer (at first Kurt Rayner of Pacific Music Press in San Francisco and then Langinger at his own Golden West Music Press in San Francisco, later in Los Angeles). The rough condition of Ives's manuscripts and his recurring bouts of illness, in addition to his deteriorating eyesight, caused innumerable delays in preparing the scores for engraving and in proofreading. Cowell gently urged him on, pleading with him to send the manuscripts, but frequently having to substitute another score when Ives's did not

in time. The movement from the 10th Symphony had originally been scheduled for the October 1928, issue, but took Langinger seven months to engrave massive work. Ives, who “got laid up” a month that fall, was unable to start proofreading until mid-October. When the symphony finally appeared in January, the important “Conductor’s Note” was missing and had to be sent to the subscribers in the next *New Music* issue.

The publication of *Thirty-Four Songs* was originally planned for the April 1933, issue but was not published until October 1933. By then the proposed album of seven songs had grown to thirty-four. It ended up to be one of *New Music*’s pricier issues—\$390.26 for printing and distributing seven hundred copies.<sup>38</sup> “It looks large,” Ives admitted, when he received the bill, but, pleased with the result, he declared, “It was a good job—I’m glad it’s done.”<sup>39</sup> For the publication of *Forteen Songs*, there was such confusion in mailing the compositions to California that one of the songs was never counted; nineteen songs were entitled *Eighteen Songs* and remained that way for years in the *New Music* catalogue. The mixup over Ives’ *Calcium Light Night* began in 1936, when Cowell edited the piece and returned it to Ives.<sup>40</sup> Ives then returned it to Cowell (I thought he did) to publish in *New Music* as *Calcium Light* in the early 1950s. Long after its publication and after the Theodore Presser Company had absorbed the *New Music* catalogue, it was discovered to be *The Gong on the Hook and Ladder*, already assigned to Peer International.<sup>41</sup>

Ives was so intimately involved in *New Music*, both through the publication of his works and through his financial support, that Cowell consulted him before undertaking any new project. In the fall of 1931, while in Germany on a Guggenheim fellowship, Cowell wrote to Ives with characteristic spontaneity, “I have an idea, first born, to change N.M. a bit—”<sup>42</sup> It was an ambitious plan to publish two concurrent series—the regular *New Music* series printed in California four times a year and limited to small piano and chamber works, and a related series of orchestral works, printed in Europe where costs for printing were less. Cowell needed Ives’s support to proceed, and he closed his proposal with, “Please let me know what you think.” He did not even wait for a reply, but wrote again three days later, expanding on his ideas and filling in details on costs. He pinpointed Ives’s role:

It seems to me that it would be a shame not to take advantage of this, and if you approve, and feel that you can devote about \$175 per issue to *New Music* as you suggested in our last talk, then I will go ahead with the new plan.

Possibly anticipating that Ives might consider the new series too great a drain on his resources, Cowell tried to make the proposal more palatable, pointing out that *New Music* would gain more subscribers through the additional series and that he would “rapidly be able to reduce the support necessary from you. . . .” He hoped, he said, to be able to avoid having a “double deficit this season, and having to call on

you twice for extra help!” However, for Cowell, there was no one to help but Ives, and so he closed with his strongest appeal:

The financial burden of ALL the new musical activities in America is too much for you to bear, in spite of your grand willingness to bear it. I will certainly do my share toward finding someone else who will share the burden! It is monstrous that there IS no one else up to now!<sup>43</sup>

Ives’s response, as usual, was positive, and the Orchestra Series of *New Music* was launched in March 1932, with an announcement in the *San Francisco Examiner*,<sup>44</sup> a flyer inserted in the April issue of the quarterly, and subscriptions to the new series by, among others, composers Aaron Copland and Lehman Engel, singer Judith Litante, critic Olin Downes, and conductor Fritz Reiner. Blanche Walton was recorded as having contributed \$25, and Ives was listed as a “life subscriber” with his “special donation” of \$400.<sup>45</sup>

The Orchestra Series proved to be one of Cowell’s most expensive ventures, but Ives contributed heavily, not only for the publication of his own works, but for that of others. In November 1932, Cowell wrote that he needed \$150 to start the 1933 Orchestra Series.<sup>46</sup> After Ives had sent the money, Cowell found himself in another emergency and needing \$196 to pay for the printing of Ruth Crawford’s *Three Songs*. In December he wrote Ives that he had withdrawn that amount from the “book money” (\$500) which Ives had forwarded to buy copies of Cowell’s book *American*

*Composers on American Music* (1933).<sup>47</sup> The “book money” was also used to publish another work in the Orchestra Series that winter of 1932–33—William Russell’s *Fugue for Eight Percussion Instruments*.

By April 1933, Ives had decided to establish a special fund for the Orchestra Series—\$105 a month. But even that was not enough for the most ambitious and costly edition in the series—*Sun-treader* by Ruggles, autographed in Berlin, lost, then reengraved by Langinger in San Francisco. After eighteen months, the long and difficult process ended, and two hundred fifty copies of the work were distributed in October 1934. The total bill was \$1,000; it was paid by Ives.<sup>48</sup>

Like the “book money” which somehow paid for music rather than books, another fund established by Ives was sidetracked to pay *New Music* bills. In August 1929, after one of Cowell’s visits, Ives mulled over some of the plans they had discussed in July and wrote to Cowell in Menlo Park:

I’ve been thinking about what we discussed just before you left—or rather, just after you came—(your brief visit was like a prologue & coda in one measure)—that there should be some money given to the composers in “New Music” even if only nominal & inadequate is more advisable than having none. It seems to me that it is only a decent thing to do, but it may help to increase the feeling of permanency in its work.

As usual Ives wished to remain anonymous and suggested how Cowell should explain the small fund to the composers:



he composers will understand that it will not affect the original profit-sharing plan (that's a big word for our profits to take)—but . . . there have been no profits yet, just a word, if you think it well, in that connection—that the fee is but from a (small) fund which friends of the idea of the publication, its aims etc. have been glad to contribute, something of that sort, if you think best, so there will be no misunderstanding of the situation. Only I would prefer to have only you know that it comes from me. Am enclosing a check \$200 for the 1st–2 years i.e. 8 [issues] @ \$25, and I think I can subscribe at least \$600 yearly. \$500 for the general fund and \$100 for the 4 fees.

In a postscript Ives declined his share in the July 1, 1929, issue, saying that the composer of the October, 1929, issue should receive his portion. Then he suggested another way of approaching the composers:

In writing to the composers, I think it may be alright to say that the fee is from the operating expenses,—what you & I contribute is a part of that—you give me, physical and mental energy and I rampum.<sup>49</sup>

Ives's plans disintegrated when the fall 1929 bills came in. Within a month after Cowell had written to Ives confirming the plan, he wrote again with an alternate proposal. There was only \$60 in the bank and he needed \$200 to pay for the October issue of *New Music*.<sup>50</sup> The situation did not improve; the following August Cowell was using the composers' fees to pay bills

and he wrote to Ives: "I have nothing particular to write to you about, but just wish to drop a line anyway, in general." He then discussed *New Music's* financial difficulties, adding, "I had to take \$25.00 which is nominally for the composers of the JULY issue, to put into the paying up of bills, however . . ."<sup>51</sup>

In spite of Ives's financial assistance, there is little evidence that he interfered with Cowell's artistic decisions. Early in their acquaintance Ives had urged closer ties between the *New Music* and the Pro-Musica societies, suggesting that mailing lists be exchanged<sup>52</sup> and that manuscripts played at Pro-Musica concerts be published in *New Music*.<sup>53</sup> Cowell acted on the former idea, but not the latter.

There were times when Cowell discussed his ideas with Ives, knowing that without Ives's financial support he could not act. A case in point was Cowell's acquisition of a piano piece by Arnold Schoenberg for *New Music*. In July 1931, he wrote to Ives about such a possibility:

Adolph Weiss writes me that Arnold Schoenberg offered his piano piece, opus 33a, to us (*New Music*) at a fee of \$100. Here is where I would welcome your advice some more. I think that about once a year, we might do some European work, as we did the Webern last season, and it gives *New Music* very high standard[s] to have represented, only the very best of the Europeans. Also, it seems to me that it is an opportunity to catch a man like Schoenberg between tie-up contracts [He] has always had one with the Universal. The fee is very low, as such

things go. Stravinsky would charge \$5000! Still, I hate to pay for material from Europe while I am forced to offer nothing to most of the men who write for us. What do you think?<sup>54</sup>

Within a week, Ives had wired back:

“Would accept Schoenberg offer.”<sup>55</sup>

At other times, Ives's lack of enthusiasm for a project left Cowell with no other recourse but to abandon it. During the fall of 1932, for example, he wrote to Ives from Germany about a recording series being issued by the Lindstroem Record Company of Berlin. Plans called for Cowell to select six American compositions in exchange for a guarantee to purchase 500 copies—an initial outlay of \$5,000 with a promise of \$1,800 profit. But Ives, lukewarm to the idea, urged caution, and eventually Cowell let the matter drop.<sup>56</sup>

The aborted German recording project, however, was to lead to yet another of Cowell's enterprises. Aware of the distressingly meager supply of American music recordings, Cowell became enthusiastic about the prospect of a New Music Recordings series. Following a visit to West Redding, Connecticut, where he discussed the idea with Ives,<sup>57</sup> he began investigating the recording companies. He had already lined up performers for the first two records, and, in order to issue records in January, wanted to start recording immediately:

This means an initial outlay, which could be paid back from subscriptions. Would it be possible for you to juggle your finances in such a way that there could be

\$320.00 to lay out on preparing the first two of such records within a month from now, before I leave for the west, payed back from the first subscription money received which I will go after at once. I would like to record Weiss songs with the quartet and Crawford Quartet while they are in rehearsal, and Ruggles Angels with 6 flutes, and Brants work for 11 flutes, and if possible, Reiggers work for horn, flute, and cello, as all there are to be in rehearsal in December, and the names of the artists, Barrere, Salzedo, and the New World Qt. will be valuable. So I hope it can be done! Do let me know.<sup>58</sup>

This time Ives was surprisingly unsympathetic to Cowell's ideas—perhaps because of his poor health. He had told Nicolas Slonimsky on December 5 that he had been “out of shape for the last few weeks, and am still kept on ‘my back’ most of the time—too much ‘ritin’, talkin’, playing’ and cussin’, they say.”<sup>59</sup> Furthermore, Cowell's letter had come at a low time financially: “This part of the year is the lowest with me,” he explained. With two mortgage payments and income tax due and the \$200 payment for *Sun-trees* due, he would not have \$350 available until January. He found fault, too, with the choice of music for the records and even with the idea of the series itself:

I didn't realize that the records were to be done in a series—I thought rather that records of works already published would be made and sold in a catalogue—or possibly sold in a series later on, as soon as performance by

orchestras made it possible. However we can talk to you better after Dec. 1st—To start with, why don't you have some of your music recorded—I say Ruggles & Riegger & Weiss? I know nothing about Brant's or Crawford's music—except what you, Weiss, Nic. S[lonimsky], Carl Ruggles], Becker & others have told me—which is that “in time & a nice way” they may get mansized (even Miss Ives). Knowing nothing at first hand about their music, I don't intend to advise or suggest what is to be published or recorded—all I mean is that if a record costs \$16 certainly you, Carl R., Weiss & Riegger come before Brant.

I was worried about the burden of the new series:

The main point is this as I see it—with the “2” series in *New Music* which require first consideration & obligation to try through—is it advisable at this time to assume the fixed charge & obligation of another series?<sup>60</sup>

But Cowell persisted, explaining the importance of the recordings and defending his choice of the Crawford quartet:

The reason I wish to issue them as a series is that I feel sure I can get enough subscribers to pay for the whole thing in this way . . . . And if I can get as many as 300 subscriptions, I can make both series meet without any financial backing. . . . The records can be used by many who cannot use the printed notes . . . . As to the value of the Crawford quartet, I

think it is without question the best movement for quartet that any American has written, and I would rather hear it than almost anything I can think of. [It is] a genuine experience, and rises far above Crawford's earlier works. I would like to make the record, if only to have you hear it!<sup>61</sup>

The debate ended on this note, and the *New Music Quarterly Recordings* were launched at the beginning of 1934 with songs by Adolph Weiss and the Andante from Ruth Crawford's String Quartet, 1931. The recording for July contained two works by Ives—“Barn Dance” from *Washington's Birthday* and “In the Night” from *A Set for Theatre or Chamber Orchestra*—and two compositions by Ruggles—“Lilacs” from *Men and Mountains* and the song *Toys*. Circumstances surrounding the recording illustrate a rare occasion when Ives influenced the choice of a conductor. With Cowell in California, Riegger was given the job of overseeing the recording and dealing with the volatile personalities involved. Ives, ill at the time (“can't do anything that I want to—except cuss—”) grumbled about putting \$300 or \$400 into the project,<sup>62</sup> then complained that plans for recording the works at a Pan American Association concert had gone awry.<sup>63</sup> Ruggles balked at having Slonimsky conduct his music, and Riegger, after trying unsuccessfully to get Eugene Goossens, settled on Charles Lichter, concertmaster at two recent Pan American Association concerts. “He knows the works better than Slonimsky,” Riegger claimed, in asking Ives for approval.<sup>64</sup> But Ives's



loyalty to Slonimsky was strong, and he salvaged part of the conducting duties for him:

I don't like to go back on N. Slonimsky after all the good work he has done—just because he happens to be in a [illegible] slump . . . . Nicolas might conduct the "Barn Dance" which he knows . . . and the other man Lichter do the rest—as Carl R. apparently has it in for NS . . . . I think [illegible] N.S. ought to have his name on one record—at least.<sup>65</sup>

In this case, Ives had his way: Lichter conducted "Lilacs," but Slonimsky conducted "Barn Dance" and "In the Night." Ives was more than satisfied and paid all the costs of the recording (including more than \$400 for the performers alone), by now enthusiastically supporting the latest of Cowell's ideas.

The Cowell-Ives collaboration was not only financial: each admired the other's music and did what he could to further its performance. Early in their relationship, in July 1928, Cowell thanked Ives for recommending his piano music to a pianist friend and asked Ives to send some of his works to California, "as there are several pianists, and a violinist here whom I believe will be interested in playing them."<sup>66</sup> This exchange led to the first performances of Ives's music on the West Coast: pianist Arthur Hardcastle played one of the "Emerson" transcriptions at a New Music Society concert in the Rudolph Schaeffer Studios in San Francisco on September 19, 1928,<sup>67</sup> and violinist Dorothy Minty, accompanied by pianist Marjorie Gear, per-

formed the First Violin Sonata at another Society concert in the same location on November 27 of the same year.<sup>68</sup>

While Ives arranged with his friend E. Robert Schmitz for appearances by Cowell on programs of Schmitz's Pro-Musica Society, Cowell continued to schedule Ives's works on New Music Society programs. Hardcastle again played the "Emerson" transcription on November 1929; Slonimsky conducted *Washington Birthday* on September 3, 1931; Doris E. sang four songs by Ives—*The New River*, *The Indians*, *The Housatonic at Stockbridge*, and *Walt Whitman*—on April 25, 1933; and Radiana Pazmor presented *Hymn, Thou Hidden Love of God* from "The Swimmers," *Ann Street*, and *General William Booth Enters into Heaven* on September 26, 1933. The next year Rudolphine Rudil sang *Premonitions* on February 15, 1934, and Doris Barr repeated *General Booth* and sang *Like a Sick Eagle* on April 9, 1934. *Hallowe'en* was performed on May 28, 1934, by instrumentalists engaged for the occasion by Cowell. Then, in 1951, when the name of the Society was revived briefly for a series of concerts at Columbia University (where Cowell was teaching), Ives's *Largo, Allegretto*, *Sombreoso* appeared on the program on May 10.<sup>69</sup>

Besides performing works by Ives, Cowell discussed Ives's music in numerous articles and lectures. The first article appeared in *Aesthete Magazine*, a short-lived "art magazine"; its first issue contained Cowell's "Four Little Known Modern Composers," in which he proposed that Charles Ives, Adolph Weiss, Carlos Chávez, and

as Slonimsky would “achieve world standards of excellence [and have] a potent influence on the development of musical thought in this country.”<sup>70</sup> The most comprehensive article Cowell wrote on Ives was in the November–December 1932, issue of *New Music*, the prestigious journal of the League of Composers—“American Composers IX: Charles Ives.”<sup>71</sup>

Whenever Cowell lectured on contemporary music, whether in his lecture-recitals at the New School of Social Research in New York, where he taught regularly beginning in 1930, he discussed Ives. In 1932 he gave a series of lectures in San Francisco; he was quoted as claiming that Ives and Ruggles were “at the top of the list of composers whose works are indigenous to America, because they have evolved individual formalisms which denote a minimum foreign influence.”<sup>72</sup> Later that year, Cowell carried Ives’s name to Europe.

On a trip to the Scandinavian countries, Cowell wrote to Ives, “I convinced many . . . conservatives, and got untold reams of color in all papers—(Which also in some reprinted what I said of you and Ruggles etc.).”<sup>73</sup> In 1933, on the occasion of a lecture series at Mills College, Cowell was interviewed by a reporter for the *San Francisco Examiner*. Concerning Ives, he

the American composer, Charles Ives, and the materials back in 1901 and 1902 which are supposed to have originated with Schoenberg and Stravinsky. I don’t mean to infer that Ives influenced them. Stravinsky and Schoenberg merely had the same idea years later.<sup>74</sup>

Cowell’s lectures, recitals, and management of the *New Music* enterprises suddenly ceased on May 22, 1936, when he was arrested at his home in Menlo Park on a morals charge. With Cowell sentenced and imprisoned for four years at San Quentin, the responsibility of *New Music* fell on Gerald Strang, a young composer of San Francisco, who had already been actively engaged in the New Music Workshops—informal gatherings of *New Music* composers and performers. A shocked Ives turned against Cowell but pledged to continue his financial support for *New Music*. In addition to paying for the engraving and printing of his *Washington’s Birthday* (published in the Orchestra Series in 1937), Ives was contributing \$1,500 annually to the publication. Strang, receiving encouragement and thanks from Ives for his devoted work, continued printing orchestra scores as well as the quarterly and even suggested starting a new series, expressly for chamber music.<sup>75</sup> Ives was reluctant, however, to commit himself to yet another series; after he sent Strang a discouraging letter, the idea was dropped.<sup>76</sup> During 1938 correspondence between the two men centered on reprinting Ives’s *Lincoln* and the *Theatre Set*. Then, at the end of the year, Strang received a major setback: Ives was going to cut drastically his annual contribution of \$1,500 to *New Music*. Harmony Ives, writing for her husband, informed Strang when she sent the checks for 1939 that Ives could no longer provide the same level of support. At the same time Ives suggested that fewer of the expensive Orchestra Series issues be published.<sup>77</sup>

From then until October 1939, Strang,



under pressure from Ives, Becker, and others, made plans to reorganize the edition. In July he sent a letter to the *New Music* board—Becker, Riegger, Ives, Cowell, and Slonimsky—outlining the changes, which included dropping the Orchestra Series, raising the price of the quarterly, and establishing a distribution center in New York.<sup>78</sup> Ives responded by agreeing to a monthly contribution of \$50.<sup>79</sup>

The Cowell-Ives friendship was revived in the 1940s when Cowell, paroled and later fully pardoned, established residence in the East, married, and resumed teaching at the New School. During the summer of 1940 he wrote to Ives about plans for *New Music*, now again under his directorship. Mrs. Ives answered the letter, telling Cowell that Ives was ill and would not be able to take an active role in the publication, although he would “be glad to continue the present monthly contribution.” Ives did offer suggestions about the editorship, however, remarking that a board rather than an editor-in-chief would be preferable.<sup>80</sup> And so the executive board of *New Music* was listed on the October masthead in alphabetical order with no one member outstanding.

The following year a formal arrangement was made whereby composers would receive royalty fees. Since composers represented in the earlier issues had never received royalties, it was decided to let past and present composers share any profits that might accrue. In March 1942, the distribution took place. Cowell explained the arrangement to Ives when he sent him his share: because *New Music* had shown a

profit for the first time, there would be a disbursement of about \$96 to the composers, or about \$1 per share, “plus expenses sending.” He sent \$1 to Ives “with special pleasure, although we both know so well that the only reason we have been able to make this disbursement to composers is through your continued support.”<sup>81</sup> Ives immediately sent back the money. In his acknowledgment of the returned check, Cowell requested a meeting which Ives agreed to—the first since Cowell’s return.<sup>82</sup> From then on, correspondence between the two developed much as before—with news about *New Music* flowing from Cowell to Ives, and suggestions, thanks, and checks for *New Music* from Ives to Cowell. The letters were friendly, but Cowell never again addressed him as he had before 1936—“Dear Charlie.” Now it was always “Dear Mr. Ives.”

Cowell continued to be the liaison between *New Music* and Ives and, although Ives’s monthly contribution remained at \$50, *New Music*’s editors counted on his support to stay in business. Frank Wigglesworth, in charge from 1946 to 1951, remembers that the bank account called “New Music Recordings” for the specific reason that Ives had always written out checks to New Music Recordings. Ives’s contributions, said Wigglesworth, “absolutely made the difference between being able to publish and not. It was just the amount of money we needed.”<sup>83</sup>

Ives also continued to pay for all new issues and reprints of his own music. In the 1950s, with Ives’s music becoming known and more in demand, many of the works published in *New Music* needed to be



ed. Although by 1953 there were other  
s available, the *New Music* editor,  
imir Ussachevsky, counted on Ives. In  
er to Cowell in June 1953, Us-  
evsky estimated the cost of reprinting  
*Nineteen Songs*, printing parts for two  
ements of the *Holidays Symphony*  
"Birth of July" and "Washington's  
day"), and publishing *Calcium Light*.  
cannot very well spend Ditson money  
ny of these above undertakings," he  
e requesting Cowell to ask Ives for  
ut \$600" to see them through.<sup>84</sup>  
es died on May 19, 1954. Contribu-  
continued for a short time from Mrs.  
who had promised to support *New*  
c until the end of the year.<sup>85</sup> With its  
ipal contributor gone, however, *New*  
c's future was even more uncertain.  
chevsky, feeling it necessary to give  
board a realistic assessment of the situ-  
, prepared data for a meeting held on  
17, 1955. When he added up the fig-  
for the four years from 1951 to 1955,  
und that one-third of the income had  
from Ives.<sup>86</sup> It was obvious that *New*  
c could not exist much longer. By  
several companies wanted to take over  
atalogue. The only proposal seriously  
dered was from the Theodore Presser  
pany, and, on June 9, 1958, an agree-  
was signed whereby Theodore Presser  
red *New Music*.<sup>87</sup>

his letter to the composers notifying  
of the transfer, Cowell at last felt free  
nounce the name of his anonymous  
and acknowledge Ives's support.

ose who serve and have served edito-  
ly and managerially have done so

without salary, and only the smallest  
sums have been spent for secretarial aid.  
In spite of this, *New Music Edition* has  
operated at a deficit, usually a rather  
small one, which was made up by con-  
tributions from Charles E. Ives during his  
life time, myself, and for the first issue  
from Mrs. E. F. Walton.<sup>88</sup>

Cowell, in the letter, referred to the con-  
tents of *New Music* as "noncommercial  
works of artistic value." Ives, long before,  
had proudly dubbed the publication "the  
magazine of unsaleable scores." Both men  
recognized that the fruits of their collabora-  
tion were outside the normal musical chan-  
nels, and that in order for *New Music* to  
survive it had to be nurtured with private  
funds and great sacrifice. Together they  
worked to achieve their goal—a greater au-  
dience for contemporary music. With Cow-  
ell's dynamism and Ives's money, *New*  
*Music* served its public for over thirty  
years, bringing forth score after score in an  
amazing variety of styles by every major  
American composer of the twentieth cen-  
tury. How fortunate for American music  
that Ives was there when Cowell exclaimed,  
"I have an idea!"

## Notes

<sup>1</sup> Cowell's publications: *Piano Pieces* by  
Breitkopf & Härtel (1922); *Piece for Piano*  
in *transition* (Paris, 1924); *Tiger and Lilt*  
of the *Reel* by Muzyka, U.S.S.R. (1927).  
Ives's publications: private printings of the  
Second (*Concord*) Piano Sonata (1919) and  
*114 Songs* (1922).

<sup>2</sup>First announcement of the *New Music Quarterly*. New Music Collection, New York Public Library.

<sup>3</sup>Henry Cowell, "Expenses incurred by Henry Cowell for New Music," September 18, 1944. New Music Collection.

<sup>4</sup>Letter, Henry Cowell to Charles Ives, July 27, 19[27]. Ives Collection, John Herick Jackson Music Library, Yale University. Unless otherwise noted, letters by Cowell and Ives are in the file entitled "Cowell and New Music."

<sup>5</sup>Letter, Charles Ives to Henry Cowell, August 16, 1927. Ives Collection.

<sup>6</sup>Letter, Henry Cowell to Charles Ives, August 20, 1927. Ives Collection.

<sup>7</sup>Ledger, New Music Collection. Mrs. E. F. (Blanche) Walton is known to musicologists as the host of the first meeting of the New York Musicological Society, the predecessor of the American Musicological Society, on January 29, 1930. Cowell frequently stayed at Mrs. Walton's apartment at 1 West 68th Street when he came to New York.

<sup>8</sup>In the record of expenses he wrote in 1944, Cowell listed his expenses from April to December 1927, as \$1,282.50.

<sup>9</sup>Quoted in Winthrop P. Tryon, "Publishing the New Music," *Christian Science Monitor*, January 14, 1928.

<sup>10</sup>Henry Cowell and Sidney Cowell, *Charles Ives and His Music*, rev. ed. (London, 1969). p. 104. Cowell's ledger does not document this outcome because there are no further entries after October 1927, until 1929. One of the recipients of Ives's complimentary subscriptions was Elliott Carter, then a student at Harvard. After he received the first two issues, he wrote to

Ives: "New Music is really a great thing. Henry Cowell deserves much praise. I can hear some of 'Men and Mountains' but Rhudyar's [sic] Paeans are good but they seem a little too majestic, too much of their own greatness taken for granted." (Letter Elliott Carter to Charles Ives, n.d. Ives Collection, Carter file.)

<sup>11</sup>Letter, Harry Cowell to Henry Cowell with note from Olive Cowell [January 1928]. New Music Collection.

<sup>12</sup>This movement (and the first movement of the symphony) had its first performance at a Pro-Musica Society concert in New York on January 29, 1927.

<sup>13</sup>Letter, Henry Cowell to Charles Ives, November 1928. Ives Collection.

<sup>14</sup>Letter, Nelson H. Patridge (office worker) to Henry Cowell, March 11, 1928. New Music Collection.

<sup>15</sup>Letters, Henry Cowell to Charles Ives, February 28, May 20, and August 12, 1928. Ives Collection.

<sup>16</sup>Letter, Charles Ives to Henry Cowell, October 15, 1928. Ives Collection. Ives may have been referring to his penchant for systematic patterns, e.g. the mirroring of retrogrades in the accompaniment to *Sililoquy* and the carefully built-up crescendos leading to the explosions in the *Fanfare of July*.

<sup>17</sup>Letters, Henry Cowell to Charles Ives, October 15, 1928, and Charles Ives to Henry Cowell, December 3, 1928. Ives Collection.

<sup>18</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>19</sup>Letter, Henry Cowell to Charles Ives, January 28, 1929. Ives Collection.

<sup>20</sup>Letters, Henry Cowell to Charles Ives, October 30, 1929, February 14, 1929,

19, 1930. Letter, Charles Ives to Henry Cowell, April 17, 1930. Ives Collection.

Letter, Henry Cowell to Charles Ives, September 9, [1930]. Ives Collection.

Letter, Henry Cowell to Charles Ives, January 10, 1931. Ives Collection.

Letter, Henry Cowell to Charles Ives, September 14, 1931. Ives Collection.

Letter, Henry Cowell to Charles Ives, September 19, 1932. Ives Collection.

Letter, Charles Ives to Henry Cowell, [May or August 1934]. Ives Collection.

Letter, Henry Cowell to Moss Ives, July 7, 1932. Ives Collection.

Letter, Henry Cowell to Charles Ives, March 27, 1928. Ives Collection.

Letter, Henry Cowell to Charles Ives, April 10, 1928. Ives Collection.

New Music financial statement, April 1928. New Music Collection.

Letter, Henry Cowell to Charles Ives, April 10, 1928. Ives Collection.

Letter, Charles Ives to Henry Cowell, August 12, 1928. Ives Collection.

Letter, Henry Cowell to Charles Ives, August 20, 1928. Ives Collection.

Letters, Henry Cowell to Charles Ives, August 28 and September 8, 1930. Ives Collection.

Letters, Henry Cowell to Charles Ives, August 3 and July 13, 1931. Ives Collection.

Letters, Henry Cowell to Charles Ives, September 14, 1931 (Ives Collection) and to Denny (New Music treasurer) to Charles Ives, November 21, [1931] New Music Collection.

Ledger sheet, [1933–34]. New Music Collection.

Letter, Charles Ives to Henry Cowell,

[spring, 1935]. Ives Collection.

<sup>38</sup> Invoice, Golden West Press to New Music, October 13, 1933. New Music Collection.

<sup>39</sup> Letter, Charles Ives to Henry Cowell, [October 31, 1933]. Ives Collection.

<sup>40</sup> Letter, Henry Cowell to Charles Ives, April 28, 1936. Ives Collection.

<sup>41</sup> The issue was finally resolved when Arthur Hauser, president of the Theodore Presser Company, accepted Cowell's proposal that the copyright of the music be assigned to Peer International (owner of the copyright of *The Gong on the Hook and Ladder*) and the copyright for the title *Calcium Light Night* be retained by Theodore Presser so that they could publish the correct music. (Letter, Arthur Hauser to Henry Cowell, December 3, 1962. New Music Collection.)

<sup>42</sup> Letter, Henry Cowell to Charles Ives, November 14, 1931. Ives Collection.

<sup>43</sup> Letter, Henry Cowell to Charles Ives, November 17, 1931. Ives Collection.

<sup>44</sup> "Henry Cowell," *San Francisco Examiner*, March 20, 1932.

<sup>45</sup> "Orchestra Series Free List." New Music Collection.

<sup>46</sup> Letter, Henry Cowell to Charles Ives, November 26, 1932. Ives Collection.

<sup>47</sup> Letter, Henry Cowell to Charles Ives, December 11, 1932. Ives Collection.

<sup>48</sup> Invoice, Golden West Press to New Music, July 20, 1934. New Music Collection.

<sup>49</sup> Letter, Charles Ives to Henry Cowell, August 29, 1929. Ives Collection.

<sup>50</sup> Letter, Henry Cowell to Charles Ives, October 15, 1929. Ives Collection.

<sup>51</sup> Letter, Henry Cowell to Charles Ives,



August 28, 1930. Ives Collection.

<sup>52</sup> Letter, Henry Cowell to Charles Ives, July 26, 1928. Ives Collection.

<sup>53</sup> Letter, Charles Ives to Henry Cowell, August 12, 1928. Ives Collection.

<sup>54</sup> Letter, Henry Cowell to Charles Ives, July 13, 1931. Ives Collection.

<sup>55</sup> Telegram (or notes taken on telegram), Charles Ives to Henry Cowell, July 19, 1931. Ives Collection. The composition published in *New Music*, V/3 (April 1932) was Schoenberg's *Klavierstück*, Op. 33b, possibly completed expressly for publication in *New Music*.

<sup>56</sup> Letters, Henry Cowell to Charles Ives, November 26, December 2, December 5, and December 11, 1932. Ives Collection.

<sup>57</sup> Letters, Henry Cowell to Charles Ives, October 23, 1933, and Charles Ives to Henry Cowell, October 31 and November 4, 1933. Ives Collection.

<sup>58</sup> Letter, Henry Cowell to Charles Ives, November 8, 1933. Ives Collection.

<sup>59</sup> Letter, Charles Ives to Nicolas Slonimsky, December 5, 1933, in Nicolas Slonimsky, *Music since 1900*, 4th ed. (New York, 1971), p. 1336.

<sup>60</sup> Letter, Charles Ives to Henry Cowell, [November 12, 1933]. Ives Collection.

<sup>61</sup> Letter, Henry Cowell to Charles Ives, November 14, 1933. Ives Collection.

<sup>62</sup> Letter, Charles Ives to Henry Cowell [March 1934]. Ives Collection.

<sup>63</sup> Letter, Charles Ives to Henry Cowell, April [27 or 30], 1934. Ives Collection.

<sup>64</sup> Letter, Wallingford Riegger to Charles Ives, May 10, 1934. Ives Collection.

<sup>65</sup> Sketch for letter, Charles Ives to Wallingford Riegger [May 13, 1934]. Ives Collection.

<sup>66</sup> Letter, Henry Cowell to Charles Ives, July 26, 1928. Ives Collection.

<sup>67</sup> Program. New Music Collection. work could have been either the first movement of the *Concord Sonata* or one of the transcriptions Ives made of material from its "Emerson" movement.

<sup>68</sup> Program. New Music Collection. There were no local reviews of the Hardcastle recital, but a San Francisco critic, Marjory M. Fisher, said about the Ives violin sonata: "Charles Ives, of Connecticut, invested his Sonata with sweet lyrics of contrasting modes. Some were self-assertive and some were modest as a violet. A large part of the composition devoted to paraphrases of old American tunes such as the Old Oaken Bucket, hymns, and Negro spirituals. Consequently it seemed lacking in originality." "Jury Given in San Francisco," *Musical America*, December 15, 1928.

<sup>69</sup> Programs. New Music Collection.

<sup>70</sup> I/I (August 1928). 19-20.

<sup>71</sup> X, 24-33.

<sup>72</sup> Marjory M. Fisher, "Henry Cowell Gives Lecture and Musicales," *San Francisco News*, June 1, 1932.

<sup>73</sup> Letter, Henry Cowell to Charles Ives [1932]. Ives Collection.

<sup>74</sup> Ada Hanafin, "Henry Cowell, Composer, Talks on Primitive Music and Modern Composers," June 11, 1933.

<sup>75</sup> Letter, Gerald Strang to Charles Ives, October 20, 1937. Ives Collection, Strang file.

<sup>76</sup> Letters, Edith Ives (for Charles Ives) to Gerald Strang. October 16 and November 30, 1937. Ives Collection, Strang file.

<sup>77</sup> Letter, Harmony Ives (for Charles Ives) to Gerald Strang.

) to Gerald Strang, December 11, 1938. Ives Collection, Strang file.

Letter, Gerald Strang to Editorial Board of *New Music*, July 10, 1939. Ives Collection, Strang file.

Letter, Harmony Ives (for Charles Ives) to Gerald Strang, July 20, 1939. Ives Collection, Strang file.

Letter, Harmony Ives to Henry Cowell, August 14, 1940. Ives Collection.

Letter, Henry Cowell to Charles Ives, March 2, 1942. Ives Collection.

Letters, Henry Cowell to Charles Ives, March 18 and April 15, 1942. Ives Collection.

Interview by author with Frank Wigglesworth, New York, April 15, 1975.

Letter, Vladimir Ussachevsky to Henry Cowell, June 17, 1953. New Music Collection. New Music had received a \$1,000

grant from the Alice M. Ditson Fund at Columbia University "to assist the corporation in putting its affairs in order." (Report on financial condition of the N.M.E. Corporation, May 17, 1955. New Music Collection.)

<sup>85</sup> Letter, Vladimir Ussachevsky to Harmony Ives, June 24, 1954. New Music Collection.

<sup>86</sup> Notes prepared by Vladimir Ussachevsky for board meeting of N.M.E. Corporation, May 17, 1955. New Music Collection.

<sup>87</sup> Copy of agreement between the Theodore Presser Company and N.M.E. Corporation, June 9, 1958. Original, property of Frank Wigglesworth.

<sup>88</sup> Letter, Henry Cowell to Ernst Bacon, September 12, 1958. New Music Collection.

## Braille Music Forum: Choral Music

by Bettye Krolick

The Forum welcomes the following contribution from Carlton Eldridge, a choral conductor and singer. For the past 35 years Mr. Eldridge has directed sighted singers in church, civic, and school choruses. As a concert and oratorio tenor—he has sung 93 *Messiah* performances—Eldridge is known throughout the United States. He has also taught voice, opera production, and music literature at Springfield College in Illinois.

### Carlton Eldridge comments

Directing a choir can be one of the most viable and satisfying exercises in self-expression for a visually impaired musician, providing a unique platform to achieve social recognition and a means of employment. Churches, civic and service organizations, industries, private and public schools, and colleges employ choir directors. Furthermore, many imaginative musicians organize their own choral groups among friends or in the community, often with financial sponsorship. The compensation for the choir director ranges from self-satisfaction and recognition to a token stipend or gift, or even full employment.

How can the qualified blind musician break into this profession? First of all, he or she must be imaginative, well-trained musically and self-confident as a blind musician. Besides formal conducting courses, he or she may require special coaching in hand motions for directing. Secondly, there must be a burning desire to bring to others the pleasure of singing together. Finally, the blind choral director must be able to instill confidence in sighted singers. Having a good hand a braille score is the major factor in instilling this confidence.

The choral score, unlike that for band and orchestra, consists of only a few staff lines of voice and text. It can be readily reproduced and easily read in braille. The score “parallel” is spanned by the left hand, leaving the right hand free for conducting. Occasionally, the left hand may be required for direction. Because each parallel is separated by a free line, this format can easily resume its place. The compactness of this braille choral score, in which the voices are bar-over-bar, permits the entire choral fabric to be perused and studied readily, even to the extent of sight-reading with the singers. It is as simple as that.

From my experience I offer a few suggestions: A music stand which can be adjusted to a flat is a necessity. It is better that this stand be turned so that the “lip” is away from the director. Instrumental sections, when the chorus is not singing, may either be indicated by rests or by a line cued with the top line of the accompaniment. If one learns the score well, it may suffice to have only one line of music, the hand being ready to move up or down to any line which may be required. A voice which predominates may be indicated by dots before the margin of the line or by some indication within the line. This can be done as the score is being prepared or with a stylus on the finished score, much as a pencil might be used on the printed score.



Whenever possible, I keep interpretive directions out of the music score and place them on the left margin, parallel to the music, as it is important to keep this area uncluttered. Sometimes, as in the case of well-known or repetitive text, such as *Kyrie eleison*, the text may be omitted, as it is the music which most concerns the conductor. Occasionally, in very complicated music I re-copy the music without the text, eliminating the need for constantly turning pages. This concession can be made only when the choir is familiar with the music. I find that choral music should be written on one side of the page only, as the movement of the left hand should be held to a minimum. I use 8½ x 11-inch paper and three-ring loose-leaf notebook covers.

The blind choral director may have to be his or her own transcriber, as there is very little choral music available in braille and even less in the choral score format. Because this format is rarely described in the international and American manuals, certified braille transcribers usually assist in this work. I have often found it expeditious, however, to be my own transcriber, because of the time element, and because of certain short-cuts which might facilitate my work, which could not be incorporated in a universal code.

Success in any endeavor is in direct proportion to the capabilities, ingenuity, and personality of the individual. Too often, a visually handicapped person gives up after only a few rebuffs, thus prejudicing through self-pity the concern of friends and supporters. One success in ten attempts is a victory. I cannot understand why there are not hundreds of blind choral directors.

### Comments from Bettye

We need to hear from other blind choral conductors. What are your experiences? What do you have to share? Comments from instrumental conductors and other musicians are also welcome. The Forum attempts to provide a place to exchange opinions and ideas. Its value depends upon your participation. Send your comments to Bettye Krolick, 602 Ventura Road, Champaign, IL 61820.

### How to obtain choral music

NLS has about 1,500 titles of choral music listed in its *Braille Scores Catalog: Choral* (1979). Available in braille and large print, this catalog lists music for SATB, TTBB, SSA, etc. under headings "Sacred Choruses" and "Secular Choruses." Publisher information is also provided. Since new titles are added to the collection each month, check the listings in this publication or call to see if what you need is available or is in process of being brailled. Braille manuscripts prepared for NLS include individual voice parts, an accompaniment part, and a vocal score.

NLS will consider adding a title to its collection upon request from readers if that title is a part of NLS' general collection development guidelines. This means that in some cases a conductor could plan major works a year in advance, allowing for transcription and preparation time.

Local scores brailled in the U.S. are written in bar-over-bar format and contain the individual staves of music for each voice part. If all voices sing the same words, only one line of text ap-

## Features Choral Music

parts; if different words are sung at the same time, more lines appear as needed and are identified with the standard abbreviations, i.e., S for soprano, A for alto, etc. In music transcribed prior to 1975 the text appears below the music; in music transcribed since 1975 the text appears above the music, this change having been made to conform with solo vocal music where the text is located above the music. In recent correspondence with music transcribers from Finland, I was interested to learn that they made the same change in format at about the same time as the Americans, although neither knew what the other was doing. Finland now prepares vocal scores in bar-over-bar format with text above and music lines below.

Vocal scores not written bar-over-bar usually have a paragraph of text followed by paragraphs of music for each individual voice part. This format is difficult to use for conducting purposes. Other vocal score formats are described in the *Dictionary of Braille Music Signs* but they are seldom found in the scores available in this country.

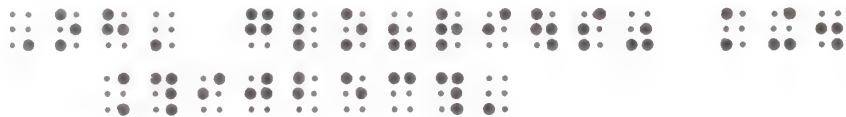
## Correlation of text to music

No matter what format is involved, every singer using braille should understand how to tell which notes correspond to which syllables of the text. In print this is accomplished by aligning the syllable under the note; in braille it is done primarily with quotation marks in the text and with slurs in the music line.

In braille vocal music, each syllable is understood to be sung to a single note of music unless a braille sign indicates to the contrary. The syllabic slur, dots 1-4, in the music line indicates that more than one note goes with a single syllable; this slur, which may be doubled if necessary, connects all notes to be sung on one syllable.

Quotation marks in the text line indicate that more than one syllable is sung on a single note. They surround the syllables that are to be elided (sung together), and in some transcriptions the corresponding note is followed by a sign for two, dots 1-2, or three, dots 1-2-3, to indicate the number of syllables falling on that note.

Example:



The text "Oh, glorious king" is written in the top line and the music is in the next line. "Oh" is sung on fifth octave C, "glo-" on eighth note A. Quotation marks surround "ri-ous" indicating that the two syllables are sung together on eighth note B which is followed by the symbols 1-2, to confirm that two syllables go with that note. The one syllable word "king" is on the last two notes which are slurred together. (The *Dictionary of Braille Music Sign* print pp. 179-80; braille pp. 229-230). The braille music code helps make it practical for visually handicapped persons to participate in choral groups either as singers or conductors.

# New Music Materials

The following works are available on loan from the Music Section, National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C. 20542.

Braille and recorded materials may also be purchased from their respective producers. Large-print scores are available on loan only. These listings show, where possible, composer, title, print publisher, producer, and Music Section catalog number. Materials in the music collection are available on two-month loan, renewable upon request.

## Sources

Edmon/Arabesque Order Division, 2700 Richardt Ave., Indianapolis, Indiana 46219  
Kways Records and Service Corp., 43 West 61st St., New York, New York 10023  
L. Handcopied braille; available only on loan from the Library of Congress  
RNIB. Royal National Institute for the Blind, 224 Great Portland Street, London, W1N 6AA, England  
B. Regione Toscana—Stamperia Braille, Istituto Nazionale dei Ciechi "Vittorio Emanuele II," Via Aurelio Nicolodi n. 2, Casale n. 5/1257, Firenze 50131, Italy  
B. Verein zur Förderung der Menschenbildung e.V., 26 Bleekstrasse, Hannover-Kirchrode 3000, West Germany

## Braille

### Books

#### Librettos

Verdi, Giuseppe  
**Don Carlos** (English & Italian)  
**BRM 26399**  
G. Schirmer HC

### Music

#### Choruses, Sacred

Praenestinus, Jo. Petraloysius  
**Missa "Aeterna Christi Munera"** **BRM 26218**  
Sten SNB

#### Choruses, Secular

Schubert, Franz Peter  
**Pax Vobiscum** **BRM 26478**  
Novello RNIB

#### Organ Music

**Antichi Autori Italiani** **BRM 26238**  
Peters SNB

**Bach, Johann Sebastian**  
**8 Kleine Präludien und Fugen,**  
S. 553–560 **BRM 26452**  
Vogel VFB  
**Chorale Preludes (Selections)**  
**BRM 26443**  
Peters VFB  
**Chorales** **BRM 26442**  
Bärenreiter VFB  
**Concerto, S. 596, D minor**  
**BRM 26449**  
Peters VFB



**Fantasia**, S. 562, C minor  
Vogel VFB  
**Sonata**, S. 525, E flat major  
**BRM 26472**

Vogel VFB  
**Sonata**, S. 526, C minor **BRM 26450**  
Peters VFB  
**Sonata**, S. 527, D minor **BRM 26471**  
Vogel VFB  
**Sonata**, S. 528, E minor **BRM 26469**  
Vogel VFB  
**Sonata**, S. 529, C major **BRM 26473**  
Peters VFB  
**Sonata**, S. 530, G major **BRM 26474**  
Peters VFB

**Bottazzo, Luigi**  
**Pieces**, op. 132 **BRM 26231**  
Sten SNB

**Brahms, Johannes**  
**Collected Organ Works** **BRM 26448**  
Breitkopf und Härtel VFB

**Brandner, Karl**  
**Fughetta** **BRM 26461**  
publisher undetermined VFB

**Brosig, Moritz**  
**Prelude and Fugue**, E major  
**BRM 26470**  
Leuckart VFB

**Bruhns, Nicolaus**  
**Preludes and Fugues** **BRM 26453**  
Kistner und Siegel VFB

**Buxtehude, Dietrich**  
**Prelude and Fugue**, A major  
**BRM 26465**  
Bärenreiter VFB

**Die Gesänge Ave Maria** **BRM 264**  
publisher undetermined VFB

**Koch, M.**  
**Vom Himmel hoch, da komm' ich**  
**her** **BRM 26440**  
Vogel VFB

**Organ Music, Arranged**  
**Bach, Johann Sebastian**  
**Toccata**, S. 916, G major **BRM 26**  
Vogel VFB

**Piano—Studies and Exercises**  
**Pick-Mangiagalli, Riccardo**  
**Etudes**, op. 31 **BRM 26237**  
Carisch SNB

**Schmitt, Aloys**  
**Etudes**, op. 16 **BRM 26276**  
Ricordi SNB

**Piano Music**  
**Brahms, Johannes**  
**51 Übungen (51 Exercises)** **BRM 26**  
Simrock SNB  
**Clavierstücke**, op. 119, no. 4  
**BRM 26270**  
Ricordi SNB

**Chopin, Frédéric**  
**Impromptus** **BRM 26305**  
Ricordi SNB

**enck, César Auguste**  
**lude, Choral et Fugue** BRM 26303  
 iff SNB

**elitt, Cornelius**  
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Historical recording including interviews

Maggie Teyte and eleven unreleased

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France with Jean de Reszke; her voice, range,

technique; and her experience singing in

operatic plays. With a variety of accompa-

nyments including Gerald Moore and Alfred

Nightingale, Teyte sings songs by Debussy,

Mozart, Purcell, Wolf, and others. Orig-

inally recorded by the British Broadcasting

Company.

**Dennis Brain**

Arabesque Recordings 8071

Historical recording about the life and ca-

reer of horn player Dennis Brain. Includes

reminiscences of friends and colleagues.

Features Brain and pianist Wilfred Parry

performing *Villanelle* for horn and piano by

Maurice Strakosck, and the Dennis Brain Wind Ensem-

ble with Wilfred Parry playing Beethoven's

*Symphony No. 1* for piano and winds in E-flat, op.

Also includes excerpts from a lecture-

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Kathleen Ferrier sings songs by Brahms and

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**Pete Seeger: Singalong Demonstration Concert**

Folkways Records FXM 36055

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January 11, 1980, with an audience that in-

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and pre-schoolers. The recording includes

not only the singing but most of the talking,

tuning, fluffs, and goofs. Songs include "If

I Had a Hammer," "Amazing Grace,"

"We Shall Not Be Moved," "John Henry,"

"Twelve Gates to the City (Oh, What a

Beautiful City)," "Greensleeves," and

"Jacob's Ladder."









# The Musical Mainstream

Sept-Oct 1981

*music*



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# The Musical Mainstream

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## Instrumental Music Catalog Available in Braille

The braille scores catalog for instrumental music, *Music and Musicians* series, is now available in braille. This catalog lists music for woodwind, string, brass, and percussion instruments and includes both solo music and music for small ensembles.

Readers may order a copy of either the braille or large-print editions by calling 800/424-8567 or writing to the Music Section, National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped, Library of Congress, Washington, DC 20542.

## Cassette Catalog Available in Large Print

The 1981 edition of the Instructional Cassette Recordings catalog, *Music and Musicians* series, is now available in large print. This annotated guide to the cassette collection in the Music Section is arranged by subject. The first section covers the appreciation of music; the second focuses on the making of music, including courses for learning how to play an instrument; and the last section covers special topics, such as folk music, jazz, and opera.

Readers may order a copy of the large-print version by calling 800/424-8567 or writing to the Music Section, National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped, Library of Congress, Washington, DC 20542.



## Carnegie Hall Is 90: A Landmark Institution Is Very Much Alive

by Dorle J. Soria,  
*Musical America*  
May 1981

It seems inevitable, looking back, that the architect of Carnegie Hall should have been a musician. William B. Tuthill, who designed it, played the cello and had a good tenor voice and, though acoustical science was then in its infancy, he had studied the acoustics of all of Europe's great concert halls. He was chosen as the architect primarily because he was Secretary of the Oratorio Society for which the hall was basically built and of which Andrew Carnegie was president. The Scottish-born philanthropist had promised Walter Damrosch two million dollars to build the hall although he himself preferred pipe organs, Scottish folk-songs, and bagpipe music to symphonies and choral works. However, young Damrosch had won him over when he visited Carnegie's castle near Perth.

There, during long walks on the moors and trout fishing and playing and explaining excerpts from Wagner's *Ring* at night, he planted the seed in Carnegie's mind, the need of New York for a beautiful new large hall. When its cornerstone was laid on May 11, 1890, Carnegie said: "It is built to stand for ages, and during these ages it is probable

that this hall will intertwine itself with the history of our country."

"Ages" is a big word but it is certainly true that the first nine decades of Carnegie Hall have justified Andrew Carnegie's belief. Culturally, at least, Carnegie Hall has intertwined itself with the history of the country. This May 5 it will celebrate that fact when the New York Philharmonic under Zubin Mehta, together with the Oratorio Society, will recreate the opening concert of May 5, 1891, when Walter Damrosch began a five-day inaugural festival with the Oratorio and the Symphony Society from which the Philharmonic is partially descended; the Philharmonic itself resided at Carnegie for twenty years, from 1892 until it left for Lincoln Center. For the occasion Damrosch had invited a distinguished guest from abroad, Peter Ilyich Tchaikovsky, who at the first program conducted his *Marche Solennelle*.

From that day to this, Carnegie Hall has been the home of great music, the Mecca to which every artist is drawn. Once, twenty years ago, its existence was threatened. The owners had contracted to sell and demolish the hall, and a large commercial building was to rise on the site. At the last minute it was dramatically saved by a group of public spirited citizens led by do-or-die idealistic violinist Isaac Stern. The miracle happened. The destruction was halted. New York City was permitted to buy Carnegie Hall and a nonprofit organization called the Carnegie Hall Corporation was chartered with Isaac Stern as president. On November 6, 1961, the U.S. Government designated the hall a national landmark, as the plaque outside the building attests.

In 1891 Queen Victoria was still on the

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British throne. Less glamorous figures ruled the country. Benjamin Harrison, a Republican, was President; his Secretary of State was, however, James G. Blaine, Damrosch's father-in-law. Someone called Grover Cleveland was Mayor of New York City. But Brahms and Verdi were still alive and Dvořák was about to come to New York to head the National Conservatory.

And in New York, where music was very much alive, the opening of the new hall was infinitely an event. The *New York Herald*: "There was a line of carriages leading from the entrance to the hall a full quarter of a mile away. The audience was most interesting as a study of music lovers not under the pressure of mandates of fashion. The women in the boxes were in evening dresses and many were the same who nightly ornamented the *loges* at the Metropolitan Opera House, yet there was a decided change in demeanor. There was no chatter or conversation. Half the house held *partitions* of the *Choral Te Deum* in their hands and turned the leaves as carefully as the choruses. There was no coming and going of dandies and outpieces. All was quiet, dignified, soft, low and noiseless, as became the dedication of a great temple of music."

The *New York Post* predicted: "May 5 will always be a memorial day in the annals of music in America as being the date on which a new Hall was dedicated which will doubtless be the center of our musical life for a century to come." Tchaikovsky, who I had been bored and bewildered by "a clergyman's long and wearisome speech" at the concert, and who had had "some painful moments" when "before my appearance I had to speak to several strangers," was happy

with his reception. "I made a sensation—according to the day's papers." Tchaikovsky had not been at ease in New York. "The houses are simply colossal. I cannot understand how anyone can live on the 13th floor." However he liked Andrew Carnegie. "Dining with him, he expressed his liking for me in a very marked manner. He embraced me (without kissing me; men do not kiss over here), got on tiptoe and stretched his hand up to indicate my greatness." Tchaikovsky died a year and a half later. Otherwise he would probably have returned, as did so many of the famous European conductors, composers, and virtuosi who followed.

It would take pages to name them all. Paderewski was the first official recitalist in November 1891. In 1892 Busoni made his first appearance under Damrosch, as did Sarah Bernhardt. In 1897 Peary lectured on his Arctic experiences. In 1893 Dvořák gave the premier of his *New World* Symphony with the Philharmonic. Casals came in 1894, as did Ysaÿe. 1906 brought Camille Saint-Saëns in a piano recital and sixteen-year-old Artur Schnabel in his New York debut with the Philadelphia Orchestra. In 1908 Mischa Elman came and there were Fritz Kreisler and Josef Hofmann in joint recital; a year later Rachmaninoff arrived. In 1911 Isadora Duncan danced with the New York Symphony in a Bach-Wagner program. That year Tetrassini and Mary Garden also sang at Carnegie Hall. 1917 brought the historic debut of Jascha Heifetz. Ten years later the boy Yehudi Menuhin made both his recital and orchestral debuts in the hall within a few days of each other. In 1925 there was the first performance of George Gershwin's



Concerto in F, with the composer at the piano. 1928 marked the dramatic double debut of Vladimir Horowitz and Sir Thomas Beecham. There followed a series of great artists, Iturbi and Casadesu and Serkin, Milstein and Francescatti and Piatigorsky . . . . But the list is too long.

And there were the famous in other fields, including Presidents of the United States. Theodore Roosevelt delivered a stirring campaign speech from the platform of Carnegie Hall in 1900. President Wilson, in July 1919, came to talk to the American people on the Peace Treaty. And back in 1901, a hero of the Boer War, Winston Churchill M.P., gave a lecture on the subject "illustrated by lantern slides." In 1906 humorist Mark Twain, whose daughter was to marry conductor-pianist Ossip Gabrilowich, came to speak on behalf of a drive to raise money for Booker T. Washington's Tuskegee Institute.

And of course, Carnegie Hall was the New York home of the titans of the symphony orchestra, from Gustav Mahler to Toscanini, from Bruno Walter to Fritz Reiner and George Szell, to Leonard Bernstein who, one Sunday afternoon in November 1945, was called on at the last minute to conduct the Philharmonic, made front-page news, and began the kind of career dreams are made of—the first American-born musician to be engaged as head of the venerable orchestra.

Opera, too, played its part at Carnegie Hall, a continuing practice. We remember the excitement when Mitropoulos with the Philharmonic presented *Wozzeck* and *Elektra* and Halasch's *Murder in the Cathedral*. Ground-breaking were the

adventurous American Opera Society evenings which, under Allen Sven Oxenborg, pioneered a long and lovely series of unfamiliar bel canto operas, introducing such singers as Monserrat Caballé, starring such artists as Schwarzkopf, Sutherland, and Callas.

Yes, if walls have ears, the walls of Carnegie have absorbed treasures of sound. Recently Carlo Maria Giulini wrote in tribute: "I believe in tradition. That is another reason Carnegie Hall beckons me back again and again. Even before I raise my baton I listen to the beautiful silence of the place. In that silence I can hear faint, vivid reverberations from the performance of other men, other orchestras, long-ago friends like Arturo Toscanini, Bruno Walter, Otto Klemperer, idols like Furtwängler, Kleiber, Mengelberg, who were my exemplars, my teachers."

We talked of Carnegie Hall with its executive director, Stewart Warkow. For him Carnegie is not a job; it is his consuming passion, his life. He spends his time there from early morning to late night. Fortunately, he is a bachelor. He is supported in this dedication by a board whose chairman, Australian-born investor-banker James D. Wolfensohn, who once studied cello with Jacqueline Du Pré and who plays chamber music at home with three small children. He also has the friendship and confidence of Isaac Stern whose personal enthusiasm, far-reaching ideas, and wide circles of influence are another source of strength in program-planning, in encouraging young artists, in guaranteeing a secure future.

The ninetieth birthday season was cor



an end when we saw Stewart Warkow. He spoke of it with justified pride. In addition to the Philharmonic, the Philadelphia Orchestra, the Cleveland Orchestra and the Boston Symphony had recreated their Carnegie Hall debut programs. There had been a "one-time only" series marking both Isaac Stern's sixtieth birthday year and his centieth as president of Carnegie. There had been an International Festival of Orchestras including the Czech Philharmonic playing works of Dvořák. There had been a Salute to New York State featuring four orchestras of the state, each playing a work by a New York State composer. There was a series of recitals by great singers and programs by four of the top string quartets. There was a "Celebration of Chamber Ensembles" and the annual series of the American Symphony Orchestra which continued to promote young performers and composers; a special event was a concert for Aaron Copland's eightieth birthday, conducted by the composer and his friend Leonard Bernstein. The centenary of three great composers was marked. Antal Dorati and the Detroit Symphony presented two all-Bartók programs. Yehudi Menuhin devoted an entire concert to the music of Enesco, Debussy, and Bartók. And Issac Stern appeared one night in a favorite role, presiding over and participating in a concert with five young artists, "acting as first-violin pater-familias." And jazz, which has always found a home at Carnegie, was presented by three historic concerts, among them "A Joyous Salute to W.C. Handy," re-creating the first Carnegie concert of W.C. Handy's Orchestra and Jubilee Singers back in April 1928. As for

Carnegie Recital Hall, it also played its part in the anniversary season by providing the ideal background for young talent, debuts, unusual and contemporary music.

Now Stewart Warkow is looking ahead. "There is a three-sided master plan: renovation, rehabilitation, restoration. We have made an architectural survey of the building to see which things need attention. By the centenary we hope we will have taken care of all the problems which plague us. We are now concentrating on the performing areas, on the foyers, entrances, lighting. And we must constantly repair and repaint. There is always in a house like this old plumbing and electric wiring to be replaced. And we must do something for the handicapped. Now we have—it was Itzhak Perlman's suggestion—a chair lift from stage to dressing room for the artist. But we must take care of the physically handicapped in the audience. We must provide easier access to the hall, public elevator service from ground floor to every level. Dressing rooms should be expanded and facilities for loading and delivery, the air-conditioning upgraded for heavy all-summer activity. Now we close between mid-July and Labor Day. We own the parking property south of the building which brings income, but we must find a better way to develop the area. And the outside of the building must be restored. In the course of years there have been many changes. For instance, street stores were carved out of the ground floor masonry. We would like to restore it to the way it once was. The coffee shop on the corner, for instance, must go."

Stewart Warkow has known the house since he was about sixteen, when he came

there to study organ on the eighth floor where Amelia Del Terzo, who taught piano and organ, reigned over a suite of studios. "The studio had a beautiful pipe organ which had belonged to Miss Del Terzo's teacher Pietro Yon, who had been organist at St. Patrick's Cathedral and who designed the original organ at Carnegie Hall. I had studied piano and violin but I loved the organ. One of my first studies was a book of Yon on pedal technique. My problem was to transfer what I had learned on the piano to the organ."

In 1954, when he was nineteen, he found a way to work at Carnegie Hall, though only as a volunteer for the Symphony of the Air, the cooperative orchestra consisting of former members of the NBC Symphony, organized after that orchestra, with the departure of Toscanini, had been disbanded. All day long young Warkow worked as a clerk in the accounting department of NBC; at night he slaved for the orchestra. "I did everything. I ran errands, stamped letters, set up music stands, made out payrolls, learned to type. I had adored Toscanini and here I could learn more about him. I had heard the Maestro's farewell concert and never forgot it. At Carnegie I used to sneak into his rehearsals and hide in a box. With a dime you could open the lock to the door—a secret I was not the only one to know."

He was to learn his destined profession by trial and error. "I'll never forget the time I spelled Toscanini's name wrong. We used to print invitations—"The Symphony of the Air founded by Toscanini"—and I spelled it Toscaninini. I suppose I was carried away by the sound. A terrible moment when I saw it in print!"

He became officially assistant manager of the orchestra and had the chance to work with Stokowski and Leonard Bernstein. His next experiences were as road manager. In Hurok he accompanied Ashkenazy on his first American tour; he also traveled with Marian Anderson and Rubinstein. For Columbia Artists Management he toured with the Royal Danish Ballet. In February 1961, when Stokowski made his Metropolitan Opera debut in *Turandot*, the conductor asked Warkow to come as his assistant. "I went to every rehearsal. I was close at hand from beginning to end—a marvelous exposure." In 1962, when Stokowski organized the American Symphony Orchestra he invited Warkow to be its manager. Warkow worked with the orchestra until 1969 when he accepted the position of Carnegie Hall house manager. Ten years later he became executive director.

Stewart Warkow not only understands the workings of his house but he understands the artists who perform there. "You have to know artists, you have to like them, you have to be aware of their needs and anticipate them. Some like coffee, some like tea. Some like their dressing room hot, some like it cold. Marilyn Horne, for example, likes the air humid; we run the shower in the bathroom before she comes. Some like to see only a few people backstage, others admit crowds. Rostropovich receives the whole world and kisses anyone in sight. Horowitz sees only a certain number of people and keeps them waiting a long time while he changes his clothes. Caballé would sign programs until dawn if the hall did not have to close. Certain artists, like Pavarotti, love stage seats, people surrounding him



eontyne Price, on the contrary, does not allow them. She needs the space and silence of the stage. And then with pianists you have to know where they want their pianos placed on the stage. With Horowitz we had a crew to guide us. It was driven into the door at the point where the front leg of the piano rests.

"Carnegie Hall is unique. I have been here on so many memorable occasions—Dallas' last concert, with Di Stefano, the day Turok died, Elisabeth Schwarzkopf's farewell there, Pavarotti's first recital—it was in 1971—and the last time Rubinstein played—he was eighty-nine. You are always close to the magic of Carnegie Hall, certainly at a concert or a rehearsal, but sometimes—even when the hall is empty and silent—you think you hear sounds embedded in the walls by a Paderewski or a Tchaikmaninoff. Many a pianist has felt that. Perhaps that is one reason artists find the hall so supportive. Cabellé said to me: 'I found well here.'"

But if Warkow is proud of Carnegie Hall he is not possessive. On his rare free nights he goes to the Metropolitan Opera or to Lincoln Center's auditoriums to hear music and artists in other settings. He does not feel a competition with Lincoln Center. "Next year we plan two projects together. One will be a mini-Mozart Festival with Pinchas Zukerman and his St. Paul Chamber Orchestra: three concerts at Carnegie, three at Avery Fisher Hall, jointly presented and promoted." Which reminded him: "Next year will be the centenary of Stokowski's birth and the American Symphony will commemorate it at Carnegie with a concert on his birthday, April 18, 1982."

Carnegie Hall feels itself a catalyst. Situated right in the middle of New York, it feels an obligation to help and change and develop the people of the city. Stewart Warkow says: "We are a public institution with public support and we owe much to the public." Carnegie Hall responds in many ways. It works with senior citizens, the hospitalized and infirm, the young. "We give regular free concerts in the schools and at senior citizen centers. We give daytime concerts when the ill and the old and the children can come. We present every kind of program, depending on the audience for which it is intended—jazz, dance and mime, chamber music. We seek out young talent and encourage contemporary music. With our work in the schools we hope we may spawn the next generation of virtuosi or composers—certainly we develop the love of music."

Recently Carnegie Hall received from the Rockefeller Foundation a \$489,400 two-year administrative grant to co-sponsor the next International American Music Competitions, formerly based at Kennedy Center. The competitions are for pianists, vocalists, and violinists in annual rotation. Howard Klein, director of arts at the Foundation, said he was so impressed by Carnegie's enthusiasm for the project that he felt the corporation might eventually take over the perpetuation of the contest. Isaac Stern responded that "Carnegie Hall will bring to the contest all its performance standards and expertise."

Other plans are in the offing. It had been reported that Isaac Stern was close to establishing a post-graduate study foundation for young musicians under the aegis of Carnegie Hall but he refused to confirm this,



or other happy rumors. The time had not yet come.

But it is not hard to persuade Isaac Stern to talk of Carnegie. It is hard to stop him. It is a subject close to his heart. "I know how the hall lives and breathes. Every artist has

left a piece of his soul there. There is not an artist I know to whom Carnegie Hall is not mother, father, brother, lover."

"*Dich, teure Halle*" . . . dear precious Hall, we greet you and wish you a very happy birthday.

## Beverly Sills as Impresario

by Peter Andrews  
*Saturday Review*  
 May 1981

For an opera singer, the ordeal of sweating it out opening-night reviews, no matter how agonizing, has the virtue of being mercifully brief—whether or not it seems so at the time. The applause tells you something at the outset, and the first notices appear with the morning newspapers. Within a few days you know if you are a success or not. A new impresario, however, can be stretched on the rack for the better part of five years. An opera company is such an unwieldy creation that it takes that long to institute new policies and then see if they are working.

Beverly Sills, now two years into her five-year appointment as general director of the New York City Opera, is nearing the halfway point in the longest opening-night ordeal of her career. And the pressure is building. Although there are still holdovers from the Julius Rudel regime, the spring 1981 season of the City Opera is Sills's first real season on her own, and with each successive production the success or failure of the company will be Beverly Sills's success or failure.

To make matters more difficult, she is forced to undergo the strain of opening-nighters in the middle of the star's spotlight. She cannot be like Sir Rudolf Bing, late of the Metropolitan Opera, who knifed his way

through artistic waters with his emotions wrapped as tightly as his umbrella, and occasionally communicated with the public through crank press releases. She is "Bubbles," whom we all love having watched her on television, laughing with Johnny Carson, and talking just like anybody else. She is "our Beverly" who can be seen dashing around New York, raising funds, and fast becoming known as one of the most adept, most ferocious pan-handlers for the arts the city has ever known. She hits the talk-show circuit, makes personal appearances, signs autographs, and poses for gag photographs—anything that will humanize opera and extend it to the largest possible audience. All of this, on top of her duties as administrative director of an internationally esteemed but perpetually beleaguered opera house. She professes to love every minute of her double duty, and if she is feeling the strain, she isn't showing it—yet. But then, Beverly Sills is used to giving masterful public performances.

At the age of 51, Sills, like her friend Mikhail Baryshnikov of the American Ballet Theatre, is in the forefront of a performer-turned-producer syndrome. On the surface it makes sense. In these days of heightened media awareness, it helps to have an instantly recognizable figure as director. It opens doors and smooths the way for the vital task of shaking money out of the rich. But the track record of singers who become impresarios has been spotty at best. Connoisseurs of theatrical horror stories still shudder at tales of Mary Garden's direction of the Chicago Opera during the Twenties, in which the legendary soprano managed to

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lose more than \$1 million in a single season, an extraordinary sum to kick away in those hard-currency days. In Sills's defense, it must be pointed out that, unlike Mary Garden, she is not trying to pursue an active singing career and be an impresario at the same time. "I haven't even sung in the bathroom since my retirement," she says. Additionally, Mary Garden, great soprano that she may have been, was not a tough-minded girl from Brooklyn who made her debut wearing a costume her mother had sewn for her. Mary Garden probably would not, as Beverly did last year, march down to City Hall and sweet talk the mayor into letting the opera house hook into the Power Authority of the State of New York to get her electricity bill cut by 20 percent. Sills knows how to count the pennies.

Still, the change of impresarios from conductor Julius Rudel—a veteran of 35 years with the City Opera—to "our Beverly" was far from comfortable. Both Sills and Rudel are old friends who go back to 1955, when Beverly was just signing on with the opera to play *Rosalinda* in *Die Fledermaus* for \$75 per performance. Originally, Rudel was to stay on as principal conductor for one more year to help Sills wind up her own singing commitments and get settled into the director's chair. Suddenly, Rudel asked to be relieved of his duties and, reluctantly, Sills agreed.

"It was a difficult time for him, having to come to *me* for permission to hold extra rehearsals—a bewildering time," she recalls. "But that is not why he left. He had received offers from other orchestras, and he said to me, 'Beverly, you have to let me out. If I don't get started on my own conducting

career now, I never will.' So I did."

Nevertheless, it is well known that Rudel and opera board chairman, John S. Samuelson, tangled on a number of artistic and administrative issues. Rudel's resignation was accepted by the board with relish, and so far as he has not been invited back.

Yet despite the tense transition, Sills had no difficulty taking over, even without Rudel's cooperation. "The administrative part of the job is not something that concerns me," she says. "I helped run Wolf Trap and God knows I am familiar with the operation of this place. I grew up here, and I know every light bulb in the house. Sure I miss performing. I go on stage and see a chair and I think, 'Hey, that's *my* chair,' but I get a feeling I can't quite put my finger on. But it passes.

"I come from a long line of labor people. My grandfather was brought to America by Eugene V. Debs to help get children out of the sweatshops. My heart is always with the people in this company who do the work. I'm perfectly willing to 'interfere' with anything I think is wrong, but I don't try to throw everything into a Beverly Sills production. I never tell a singer to do it my way. I say, 'Let me help you give *your* performance.'

Diana Soviero, a front-line soprano with the company for seven years, is typically enthusiastic about the new director. "Beverly is wonderful to work for. She's a demanding woman. She's been there and she knows the business. I wouldn't want to cross her—but the most important thing about her is that she cares about her singers."

As an administrator, Beverly Sills adheres to the ethic of nice—"I don't think you have to be a bastard to run an opera company."



” she says. “I try to accomplish as much as I can with a big grin.” And grinning, she moved decisively to assemble the staff wants. Long-time technical director Louis Sondheim was retired to consultant status and replaced by Gilbert Hemsley. Hemsley relit several of the productions and gave them a luminous shine on them. The lighting for the forest scene in Nicolai’s *Merry Wives of Windsor* was a technical tour de force that gave it a big hand the night it opened the new season. “Now,” Sills notes with satisfaction, “I won’t have to worry about the lighting for a while.”

What did concern Sills during an interview in her office in the City Opera’s catacomb basement, was the performance. *Merry Wives* was a personal selection of Sills’s, and she hand-picked the young, vibrant cast to support veteran baritone William Schramm in the comic role of John Falstaff. Inserted into the repertoire last season, it was conducted at a gallop by Rudolph Serkin and became one of the smash hits of the season.

But under the baton of Charles Mackerras, the production was laid back, and safe—the last things Sills wanted for an opening-night performance. “The ensemble singing worked beautifully,” she said the next morning. “But the production was not a triumph. It lacked humor and spirit. We’ll have to work on it.”

Sills’s dissatisfaction leads directly to the City Opera’s most important problem area, the one that has drawn the most criticism from within the company—insufficient stage rehearsal time for the singers. Sills went to her office pledging to increase the rehearsal schedules, which is the impresario equivalent of a new president’s vowing

to make the federal bureaucracy more efficient, and just about as difficult to accomplish. It is axiomatic in opera that there is never enough rehearsal time, but at the New York City Opera sometimes there is no time at all. Lighting and technical rehearsals eat up an enormous amount of time on the company’s only stage. Old productions being reinserted into the repertoire must give way to new productions being mounted for the first time.

As a result of this crunch, earlier in the season, while the company was rehearsing a new production of *Attila*, the cast of *La Bohème* was thrown on stage for their first performance of the season without any stage rehearsal at all. What should have been a dress run-through was offered as a finished production with unhappy results. A fine young cast with more than enough good voices to breathe life into the old war-horse was victimized by sloppy stagecraft, especially in the last act as the singers looked for their positions. After the first performance of the season, when the company needed rave reviews and had singers on stage who deserved them, it got a set of indifferent notices. Everyone in the company understands the limitation of stage availability for rehearsal time, but there is a feeling among some members of the company that “Beverly should be pushing harder on this.”

Running the City Opera is like working an algebraic equation in which everything equals “x” and “x” always equals money. With money, perhaps the singers could be given the time they need to prepare for performance. Eighty-five percent of the City Opera’s operating budget of almost \$15 million goes to salaries, and still there is only

money enough to offer singers a top scale of \$1,000 per performance, approximately one-fifteenth of what the major houses in Europe can offer.

"Money," says Sills, "is the only real problem I have. Or, at least, all the other problems I have can be solved with money. But I need money. Not so much to underwrite new productions. Every production I have scheduled for the next three years is already fully funded. It's relatively easy to get money for new productions or for something that gets the donor's name on the back of a seat. We run a \$2-million-a-year deficit because of operating expenses. I need money for toilet paper, and washing machines, and all the boring things no one thinks about."

How is she going to get the money?

"I ask for it."

Sills is remarkably good at asking for money. Under her aegis, annual fund-raising levels have risen from \$2 million to almost \$6 million. Her televised *Beverly!* gala alone netted the company \$1 million, and in the first three years since she has held an administrative position with the opera—she was named co-director in 1978—City Opera has surpassed its challenge grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities by as much as four to one. "Having lunch with Beverly Sills," says one petroleum company executive, "is the most expensive meal in New York. She tells you about how we have to do this for our children, and you give her a check, and then you remember you don't have any children."

"Without any question," says City Opera development director, Albert Hudes, "when it comes to raising money, Beverly is the best in the business—depending on her

availability. The trouble for me is that she's not always available. If Beverly has the choice of wooing a potential donor or attending an important rehearsal, she will be at the rehearsal."

Given the company's money problems, Beverly Sills and the City Opera will risk a fall on the quality of its repertoire and the people they can get to perform in those operas. The City Opera sits literally in the shadow of the Metropolitan. It does not like to think of itself as the "second" opera house in New York, but it is. City Opera spends \$175,000 to mount a production, and the Met spends an average of \$500,000. Sills wants a \$10 million endowment fund, and the Met is already embarked on a campaign for a \$100 million fund. The City Opera scratches to find a promising young tenor, and the Met has Luciano Pavarotti.

To find its own place in the sun, the City Opera has to resort to guerrilla-war tactics: something it has often done with remarkable success—most notably in 1966 when Sills made her own first huge success in Handel's *Julius Caesar*. The City Opera took a \$60,000 production and went up against the Met's \$750,000 production of Samuel Barber's *Antony and Cleopatra*, starring Leontyne Price, which opened the new Metropolitan Opera House in Lincoln Center. *Cleopatra*, as John Mason Brown said of Tallulah Bankhead's version of Shakespeare's classic, "barged down the Nile and sank," while Beverly Sills became an international star.

Still, the Met keeps coming at you with big stars and lush productions. The City Opera has to counter with interesting programming and ensemble playing. Sills

order of the day is to adjust the repertoire. There are several wonderful productions in the current schedule. *Les Pêcheurs Perles* has such a charming production that the audience is almost convinced the opera works. Frank Corsaro's long-time production of *Madama Butterfly* still packs an emotional wallop and his *The Makropoulos* is still the model for mixed-media opera productions. The new production of *Attila* is a real barn-burner and the surprise of the current spring season, selling to 95 percent capacity. In fact, under Sills, the entire repertory has been playing to 85 percent of capacity—up from 78 percent previously.

Nevertheless, there is some brush clearing to be done with the repertoire. The Ming Cho Lee sets for *Tales of Hoffmann* are a glaring embarrassment, and the City Opera seems to be suffering from a *Don Giovanni* as well. The Corsaro-directed production of 1972 received perhaps the most consistently venomous set of reviews of any opera production in New York in the last 10 years. "A catalogue of horrors," was a typical notice at the time. A new production, directed by John Cox, premiered last March, giving what could best be described as mixed reviews, although it prompted one critic to yearn for a return to the Corsaro production. Sills was just beginning her directorship, but she was able to make at least an important if negative contribution. "I told the director was planning to have Don Giovanni appear nude. I called him and said, 'I don't even want to hear what your concept will not be.' " The Cox direction was suggested during the fall season but with little effect.

A more short-lived failure was the New York premiere of Thea Musgrave's *Mary, Queen of Scots*. The production, imported from the Virginia Opera, was handsomely produced, and Ashley Putnam made a striking Queen Mary. But, as Donal Henahan of the *New York Times* pointed out, "The opera as a whole suffers from a lack of lyrical interest." Which is a very nice way of saying it does not contain much music worth singing. The primary appeal for mounting this waxwork was that it was cheap and helped fill the City Opera's self-imposed mandate to bring contemporary works to New York.

Sills's approach to repertory-building will come into sharper focus in the seasons to follow, as she walks the artistic tightrope between the box-office operas she needs to pay the bills, and the kind of inventive programming that has, for so long, been the City Opera's trademark. She wants popular success, but it has to be the "right" kind of popular success. "We are going to stick to our guns," she says. "We will not fall back on twenty *Carmens* a season to survive." Clearly, her soprano's heart is not at ease with a great deal of contemporary opera that is not pleasing to the voice. She would rather ransack the established operatic literature for overlooked treasures, and, if the success of *Attila* is any indication, she is finding them.

Sills is bursting with plans for new productions. This year's fall season will be preceded by three weeks of operettas: one week of the company's slick-as-a-college-yearbook edition of *The Student Prince*, and two weeks of a new production of *Song of Norway*. If they are successful, she expects



to add an existing production of *Naughty Marietta* to build a nucleus for a full, two-month operetta festival every summer, starting in 1982.

On the heavier side, an early Verdi cycle will build on the triumphant *Attila* with *Nabucco* and *I Lombardi*. Meanwhile, a much-anticipated mini-baroque festival will bring together Gluck's *Alceste*, Handel's *Alcina*, and Rameau's *Dardanus*. New productions already scheduled through next year include such varied fare as *La Traviata*, *Candide*, *Hamlet*, *Love of Three Kings*, and an English-language *Der Freischütz*. They will be joining existing productions of *I Puritani*, *Rigoletto*, *Lucia di Lammermoor*, *Medea*, *The Cunning Little Vixen*, and *Tosca*. Massenet's rarely heard *Cendrillon* will be heard with Frederica von Stade in 1983. Additionally, Sills is measuring Shostakovich's *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk* for size, and discussing the possibility of a deal with the San Francisco Opera to bring in Rossini's *Semiramide*. The sheer breadth of the planned repertoire, its mining of obscure jewels, is astounding. No other opera house offers such a varied program.

Not surprisingly, Sills plans to make the City Opera a singers' house. It boasts a number of fine young ensemble singing actors, and the not-too-secret hope is that some of them will develop into major operatic stars who can attract their own followers, as Beverly Sills and Norman Treigle did. There are several who might break through. Barry McCauley is not the most polished actor in the world, but he cuts a fine figure, and his Nadir, in *Les Pêcheurs de Perles*, was a demonstration of French singing at its zenith. Alan Titus has been everyone's favorite

utility baritone in light comedy roles, but Marcello in *La Bohème* shows the beginnings of a serious dramatic artist. The basses are well represented by Samuel Ramey and Justino Diaz.

And then, of course, there are the sopranos. Ashley Putnam is a beautiful woman and when she departs *Mary, Queen of Scots* and sinks her teeth into the Mary of *Mari Stuarda*, she demonstrates a voice to match. Carol Vaness is an enchanting singer with the constitution of a horse, singing *Les Pêcheurs de Perles*, *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, and *La Bohème* in eight days. As for those of you who miss seeing Bubbles on the stage of the City Opera, there is Gian Rolandi, who looks like Beverly, sounds rather like Beverly, and sometimes even sings with her hands in her pockets, which was one of Beverly's signatures. It is not easy to book many high-powered international stars on the City Opera's pinch-per-budgets, but the company has managed to lure Grace Bumbry with the plum parts of Abigail in *Nabucco* for the fall 1981 season and the title role in *Medea* the following spring.

The final reviews of Beverly Sills's directorship must wait a bit. She has made some important administrative personnel changes, but the problem of insufficient rehearsal time remains. Money is starting to roll in, even though the nagging problem of recurring debt plagues the opera house. Sills has proven to be an innovative builder of repertoire, and her new productions have been receiving respectful reviews. But Sills isn't satisfied. She doesn't want respect, she wants love. And she's well on her way to winning it, over again. Of course, as she counsels her

ung sopranos, pacing is extremely important in opera. Most of the heaviest bel canto singing comes in the last 20 minutes.

verly Sills has a lot of fireworks planned for the second half of her term, and she always was a good finisher.

For now, she is adjusting to the change in roles from diva to director. The transition has had some unlooked-for effects. During a touring tour of Germany last summer she found herself with John White, long-time musical director for the City Opera, in a country railway station waiting for a train, in

the pelting, freezing rain.

"John," she asked, "when I was your most valuable singer, would you have let me stand out in the rain like this?"

"Are you crazy, Beverly? Of course not."

For Beverly Sills, America's favorite soprano, it was a chauffeured limousine purring quietly at the curb, and a towel for her throat. But Beverly Sills is management now. And for Madame Director, it is a long wait in the cold rain.

## Canonic Man: An Interview with Steve Reich

by Stuart Isacoff  
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Steve Reich seems to be inextricably caught up in the idea of canons. In music he creates them; in life he follows them. In each case they have significantly shaped his direction.

His art has been labeled “minimal music,” “trance music,” “modular music,” and “phase music.” These names are an attempt to convey the essence of Reich’s approach, which consists of repeating short melodic patterns over and over in gradually changing rhythmic relationships. The result is often a kind of “slow motion” music that shifts subtly in color and in design, revealing new layers of sound at each turn.

This June he will visit I.R.C.A.M., Pierre Boulez’s musical research facility in Paris, for two weeks, after which he has an open invitation to work there through 1984. The main thrust of his work will be a new music theater work; in it he will use recorded voices from the World War II period—including those of poets William Carlos Williams and Ezra Pound—and, with the sophisticated equipment available in Paris, transform them into a musical whole. “At I.R.C.A.M.,” says Reich, “I can slow down the voices without changing their pitch, even create held chords with them.

My plan is to turn objective material into abstract music, which will itself take on a narrative (objective) reality.” The music will, of course, be carefully crafted and—what else?—canonic.

Life for this extraordinary composer-performer is equally well ordered and, he will tell you, equally rich. Since 1974 Reich has been involved in traditional Judaism. Our discussion began with a reference to his latest work-in-progress, a Psalm setting, and soon moved on to the roots—both musical and spiritual—of his style.

\* \* \*

### Tell us something about your newest project.

I’m working on verses 2 through 5 of the 19th Psalm, and I’m using the original Hebrew. Musically, the piece derives from the text in a way that nothing of mine has before. There’s no metric pattern. The meters are changing all the time to fit the text.

It’s a work for four women’s voices, all singing equally; the writing is basically in the middle of the female voice—from E above middle C to E on the top space of the staff—so instead of having soprano and alto voices, there will be a lot of unison canons. The rhythmic staggering is close, too, so the effect will be one of breaking up the words into syllables.

The voices are accompanied by electric organs, strings, clarinets, and some unusual percussion instruments—such as a small tuned tambourine without jingles. That’s because in the original Psalms we find the word “tof,” which musicologists like Kurt Sachs believe to be a small drum similar to



tambourine. Then there will be maracas, cymbals, crotales, and clapping.

**Are you trying to achieve a feeling of authenticity" with the tambourines?**

No one knows how the Psalms were sung. I have been doing research in Hebrew cantillation, and I'm interested in writing an scholarly article on it for the updating of a book, which is being translated into French at Boulez's request. But as a composer, I wanted a text that had no living tradition.

What interests me about non-Western music is not its *sound* but its *thought*: how it's put together. In fact, I wouldn't play on an African xylophone if you gave it to me. I'd add it to a museum. I would never use it in a piece. I feel that would be a kind of rape. Now, I won't say that's right or wrong. It's a personal statement.

I'm not interested in exotic scales, or exotic nasal voice sounds, because the sounds that I grew up with are the piano keyboard and the sounds of the Western instruments. And if I can't buy something on 48th Street (New York City), then I don't want to have it in my house.

I also wouldn't want to sound like a cantor, because frankly I didn't grow up with it either. But what I can learn from cantillation is a technique which makes use of a series of short motives, and which uses permutation to make them fit a sacred text. Putting together these short patterns creates longer melodies, and I would say that that is now *melody*—in the most obvious sense of that word—is what is growing in modern music. The Psalm piece is a giant step in that direction.

**Where did this interest in Hebrew cantillation come from?**

Well, it comes from the fact that I'm Jewish. When I was young, I received no information whatsoever about my heritage. I could not read Hebrew. I didn't know any of the prayers, the commentaries, the classics of this tradition. This bred in me an attitude of resentment. It was not until I was 36 or 37 that I began to have a sort of hunger for a religious practice. Like many people of the 60s, I tried Hinduism, Buddhism, and Yoga. It was all quite positive. But it wasn't, in the end, for me.

I finally found my roots again in Orthodox Judaism; it became so involving for a while between 1975 and 1977 that I wondered if I was going to be a rabbi or a composer.

**How did all this affect your musical life?**

My wife and I and our young son, Ezra, observe the Sabbath from sundown Friday to sundown Saturday, so I don't give concerts on Friday nights or Saturdays. This has had an extremely positive effect on my life. I'm not the kind of person who could work seven days a week without stopping. I'm a workaholic.

So, to say "stop" at a certain point, no matter what, was something extraordinary. As a result, I sleep a little bit better and eat a little bit better, and spend more time with my wife and child. It's something that I would recommend to all the large corporations in America.

On the Sabbath, by the way, it is forbidden to strike a match or throw a light switch—not because the act would be tiring, but because it is an act of the creative imagination, which is the very basis of human ex-

istence. When you flick on a light, you are actually summoning up the basic powers of the universe. It's something to get in touch with!

**Do you feel that this spiritual "hunger" you were experiencing comes out in the music? Although your compositions are very active, there is a sense of inactivity in them as well—some people call your work "meditative music."**

I think my music does satisfy some sort of basic hunger that I must have for what you might call ritual. I think the experience of playing it is one of a great deal of heightened attentiveness. The restful quality is more the experience of the listener. It is difficult music to perform, not only because your hands are always moving, but because you have to be aware of what other people's hands are doing as well.

Then there is the problem of not knowing where the downbeat is, because you don't really feel it if the organ is always coming in on "2" and someone else is coming in on another beat, and the glockenspiel is somewhere else.

In fact, not everyone regards this as "meditative." Some people ask me, "Don't you write any slow music?" I answer, "Well, every piece is both a slow movement and a fast movement. There's an allegro and an adagio going on simultaneously. It depends on where your focus is."

**Would you say, then, that the sense of drama a Mozart would put into his piece, which would unfold in time, is sort of compressed in your work so that different aspects are happening simultaneously?**

No. The question is, how does my music relate to the Western classical tradition? I

think this is best answered by others, rather than the composer. But I can say that I am interested in music before 1750 and after 1900, and I think my music has little to do with the periods in between. My music has nothing to do with sonata allegro form. It is not really harmonically structured, except that the harmony is determined by rhythm.

The techniques I use of canon and augmentation and diminution were arrived at in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. And they come out of a tradition which begins with Synagogue Chant, moves to Gregorian Chant, and goes on to Leonin, Perotin, Machaut and Des Prez.

There are some classical and romantic works I like—the slow movement of Beethoven's Opus 132 in A minor is an example. But by and large I don't care for it. I know it's fantastic music that defines a form of activity. It's my loss. But there's no sense in pretending that it isn't.

**Are you happy to continue in this very structured format? Do you envision changing your style at some point?**

If you listen to a number of my pieces, I think you will find that it is always sort of moving. But there is a strong neo-classical and neo-romantic movement afoot, and in my own way I am beginning to reflect an aspect of that. I am not interested in writing manifestos about what I'm doing. As far as I am concerned, if music is beautiful and sends shivers up and down my spine and really moves me, it's good. If not, it's bad. All the rest is important only after the fact. Duke Ellington was right when he said: "It doesn't mean a thing if it ain't got that swing."

Telemann was stricter than Bach in his treatment, and therefore we consider him

is great. My Telemann period is over, and  
 been for some time now. The music has  
 be an expression from your body and  
 1. Because if it isn't, it's just not going to  
 e that force, that strength, that honesty to  
 age an audience. Anything less than that  
 ust a waste of time.

Why did I become a composer? Because I  
 e music. I was apprehensive about be-  
 ning a composer. I thought I might be  
 ting into it too late. After all, my under-  
 duate work had been in philosophy. I  
 ough about the fact that Mozart had started  
 ive, Bartok had started at six and I was  
 enteen.

I faced up to the fact that I am very limit-  
 as a performer, and I decided to write

within those limits. I was going to do what I  
 can do well and not pretend to do what I  
 can't. This was undoubtedly one of the  
 healthiest decisions I ever made in my life.  
 It led to a simplification of my music, and  
 many of the techniques in my music have  
 grown out of my limitations as a performer.

So, to get back to your question. I don't  
 know for sure what I'm going to do. I feel I  
 have the normal ambitions of the Western  
 composer. I want to make my contribution; I  
 want my music to be played by other ensem-  
 bles and to have a future beyond my own  
 lifetime. All I can say is that I know what  
 I'm doing now, and I hope that what I do in  
 the future will be a surprise to me as well as  
 to you.



## An Interview with John Henry

John Henry, blind harpsichordist, visited the National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped, Washington, D.C. in July, 1980 as part of his Churchill Fellowship project to study the international availability of braille music. Shirley Emanuel, Assistant Head, Music Section, conducted the following interview with him during his stay.

\* \* \*

**John, you're in the U.S. on the Churchill Fellowship to study the international availability of braille music. Tell me more about this award.**

The Churchill Memorial Trust was set up to help people with projects that need field work. There are 3,000 people who apply per year and 3 percent get the award to travel. In my own case, for something like ten years, being a "menial" harpsichordist and nothing more, I was working with a sight reader (i.e., a sighted reader) on scores not available in braille as far as I could research. A short while ago this person died and left me literally without my professional eyes. So, one of the obvious things to do was to pursue the research into the availability of harpsichord music. In doing this I found that there seems to be little liaison between publishing houses throughout the world, and a lot of people don't know what the others are doing. I applied for a Churchill Fellowship to spend three months in the field, visiting various publishing houses and libraries as I am visiting you now in Washington. I want to meet people to get an idea about their cat-

alogs and perhaps to settle some abnormalities in those catalogs. The idea really started for my own harpsichord needs, but it sprang because of this lack of communication with me as I mentioned. It seemed to me some work needed to be done to improve communication between holders and producers of braille music and also to find out exactly what was available. Doing this from England, I was primarily concerned with making this information available to an English audience. I hope it will be spread around. The Churchill award gives me a budget to visit America, Canada, and Eastern and Western Europe to try to improve communication about the catalogs.

**When you finish traveling will you be doing a report which will be available?**

Yes, that's right. I will be here in North America for about a month and then because of teaching commitments and recitals in England, I will continue my European traveling into 1981 and make my report after that.

**And to what other specific countries will you be going?**

In Europe I hope to visit France, Germany, Holland, and Denmark, countries which have particular interest for me as a harpsichordist. All of the countries have very good collections of other sorts of music. Holland and Denmark particularly have very good recorder collections. There is a reasonably important publishing house in Prague and we—I—don't know what they produce. I might say that we learned quite a bit from the International Braille Music Catalog from the Library of Congress. This was made in 1958, I think. There was an updating or supplement a few years later.

le by the AFOB which no longer exists publisher; it is now Helen Keller International, Incorporated. From this catalog finds out about various publishing houses and Prague is one of the most interesting important ones. For instance, there's a copy of the 48 *Preludes and Fugues* of Chopin, but nobody seems to know what edition. This is of interest because not very many urtext\* editions are available in Denmark where they're doing a relatively good Henle edition.

**you mentioned another project you're doing simultaneously with the braille music research, one which is to result in a publication in about three years.**

This is the "Cyclopsian" part of the project. Having done the Churchill Foundation which will basically cover visits, I hope in three years to bring out a much more detailed collated report. Something like an international catalog, but more an annotated report on where you can get what and in the 19th edition, plus the publisher's address, phone number, and price at time of publication.

**do you envision including keyboard music as well as other kinds of music.**

The whole gamut; the whole kit and caboodle as they say over here. Absolutely everything. I don't know if I'll fit in music on a penny whistle. Is there penny whistle music in braille that you know of?

Definitive edition; edition of a work or is claiming authenticity by the composer or editors as to music and text; some includes annotation, commentary, etc.—Ed.

**I don't recall ever having seen a single example.**

I'll be trying to cover as much as possible. Obviously, working as a one-man band I know I can't cover everything. I know there will be errors in this report. I'm afraid that people who use it will find out what an idiot John Henry really is and say that he should have stayed behind the keyboard instead of going out and cataloging things. But, I hope the mistakes won't be uncorrectable or too dreadful.

**If one doesn't dare, nothing gets accomplished.**

That's just the point.

**John, you were born in Rochester, New York, and your musical training was at the Eastman School of Music; now you're a British citizen. How long did you live in the United States?**

I lived in New York during what I call my non-college years. I went to several universities, but walked out just before getting a degree. I would decide I didn't like where I was. Eventually I scraped up some money and left for Europe. I had really wanted to go to Europe ever since I was a child. So about fourteen/fifteen years ago I traveled via Icelandic Airlines to Paris through Reykjavik, Iceland, and Glasgow, Scotland, down to London where I was bought my first sausage roll, baked beans, and cup of tea from a porter at Victoria Station. I decided immediately this must be my home and then passed on to Paris. I settled in London in 1967, but whenever I could and whenever the money was available, I did travel to study with various teachers. I took a class with the legendary Nadia Boulanger in Paris. She was an amazing lady, a marvelous

teacher and a tremendous spirit, not just musically but as a human. Playing the harpsichord is like a disease for me: it crept on me little by little. As a child I remember hearing the instrument and falling in love with the sound. At the university when I played a 17th century harpsichord, I fell head over heels for it and couldn't go back to the piano for ages. I also played the clavichord at that time. My piano teacher had to remind me that I was not playing the clavichord, but the piano! Anyway, when I got to Europe I did a bit more harpsichord playing, eventually ending up at a marvelous museum in London which has some fabulous old English and Italian instruments. I taught piano and got a lecture series on music from the 15th century to the present. I suddenly woke up one morning and thought, "That's all well and good, but I don't have any early instruments." I asked a friend if he knew anyone who wanted to lend a harpsichord to me. One week later, the doorbell rang at 8:00 a.m. and there it was: a harpsichord on my door step. This has been quite an interesting experience because, unlike the pianist, the harpsichordist has to tune and maintain his instrument. I had to learn all this from scratch. It's one of the most exciting things I've done in my life. Within six months I was glued to the instrument and haven't come unstuck. Although I do still teach some piano, the harpsichord and clavichord are my instruments.

**You are teaching at Morley College. Do you teach harpsichord and piano there?**

I teach harpsichord in the private sector at Morley. This means I can give the lessons either at the college or at my home.

**About how many students do you have?**

I can remember one year when I had 15 students, but this was when I was teaching in a few colleges. I've done some teaching at the World College of Music as well. I've even taught some "music depreciation" classes—which guaranteed the students came to my lectures 50 percent less enjoyment and understanding of the music from when they walked in the door!

**You spoke earlier about your need to use a sighted reader to help you get the braille music you need in your study and teaching. Do you have other methods of working around the problem of braille music not being available?**

No, because I have found very little braille harpsichord music available. Sighted people dictate to me voice by voice and phrase by phrase from a good edition. I simply memorize as I go along, swallowing as much as I can at a time and then synthesizing and going over parts of the piece. Obviously, these people have to be ultrafastidious, because I want to know if there's a sixteenth-note rest in bar three, etc. It entails a lot of checking once I've learned a score, but I've found I can do it very quickly. And, as you probably know, Helmut Walcha, the blind organist and one of the greatest Baroque musicians of our era, learned in this same way. I like to use braille whenever I can, but there are other ways, such as using the Optacon. I was trained in England to use the Optacon for reading print. Obviously, it's invaluable for reading record jackets and articles that I need for lectures and teaching, and reading note books. I may be teaching or learning from myself. At the moment I am using it for



king my music. But I would never dare a whole recital program with the con. I wasn't taught the printed music m. Having been blind since birth, I've ys read by braille. It was a happy shock scover what the printed music page ac- y looks like. Now I know why students e such stupid mistakes! I can seriously at where the ornaments are in a piece of eau or Couperin, and how they are ed. How I can help the students with s invaluable, of course. I can also make I've got the right book for a sight reader ctate from! I received a new edition the day and needed to know whether it in- d a particular suite which I wanted to . I was able to find the piece and to over the printed page to get the layout This helped me to get a head start over ght reader who came to dictate for me; o read the voluminous editorial notes.

**When you have your sight reader or sighted assistant dictate music to does he or she actually play it for**

s, the reader plays it very slowly and, nding on the piece, voice by voice or e by phrase or half phrase by half e. The reader plays as much as I can n without making any mistakes; it is d two or three times. That varies with eece, how awake I am at the time, and fast I can take in what is being played. u use music that you get from other ries. How problematical is it for you e the different braille formats, let's nose that are used in the United s and England as compared to the ats used in Denmark and Germany? en I came to Europe I was shocked by

the paragraph style of writing in which you have a paragraph of right hand, then a paragraph of left hand. This allows you to lose your place nicely! Actually I do find that for contrapuntal music, paragraph writing is very good. Getting used to the different systems is a necessity. I take the attitude that I would rather have this piece of music in braille—whatever the system—than not to have it at all. There are always objections raised to getting music from abroad because of this variable system business. I can't see it as an objection if the piece is there, and I really want it. The systems are so easy to adopt. Once you've dealt with them for a while, you get to know them, and know how to go back and forth between systems. I do prefer certain systems for certain types of music.

**Could you be more specific?**

I wouldn't like to learn a Brahms *Intermezzo*, for instance, from the paragraph, because you do lose your place so nicely. It is so marvelous the way the pages turn over in just the wrong spot. Keeping the right hand and left hand going smoothly can be difficult. On the other hand, I wouldn't mind at all, in fact I enjoy learning Bach preludes and fugues from the paragraph system, because in contrapuntal writing it's a good idea to learn voice by voice or maybe a couple of voices in the same hand at the same time.

**John, you're so busy as a musician, as a teacher, and as a researcher that you have to schedule your projects. Do you have any advice you would like to pass on to aspiring blind musicians?**

Yes. Keep aspiring and keep playing. We have a tremendous tradition of blind musicians from people like Cabézon, the 16th

century organist and harpsichordist, to people of our own age. Delve into every possible avenue of finding braille music. From what I've seen at the Library of Congress, one of the best possible avenues is the Library of Congress' National Library Service, which is an incredible set-up. You have such a marvelous array of catalogs and music in

your library. Also, try to use the Optacon; there is one at your disposal; see if you can make something of printed music. If necessary use sighted assistance or recorded assistance, because if it is fastidious and professionally done, this recorded assistance can be useful either on its own or as a supplement to the braille and the Optacon.

## Braille Music Forum: Dialogue on 20th Century Notational Devices

Betty Krolick

When changes are made in the music code, braille music readers invariably wish they had opportunities for input. Such is your chance now. The Music Advisory Committee for the Braille Community of North America (BANA) has requested that this forum be used to get feedback from braille readers before making recommendations for the braille notation of print music symbols found in some twentieth-century music. In the past, the Music Advisory Committee has concentrated on revising and clarifying existing signs. That committee devised signs for indicating the end of a line or a slur between staves; for designating the final music comma (the comma being absent in braille to indicate unusual groupings of print notes); and deciding to use the existing literary code for the letters and numbers of chord symbols found in popular music. However, the signs being prepared for twentieth-century print notation symbols in many cases cannot be based on or related to existing music braille signs. In print—as in braille—notation symbolizes through signs and directions pitches, durations, and other phenomena and gives instructions for presenting musical sounds. For several centuries print notation remained essentially unchanged. During the first part of this century, however, changes and innovations began, rapidly increased during the 1950s and continue today. These notation changes are concurrent with the stylistic innovations that can readily be heard in the music of composers as Elliott Carter, Karlheinz Stockhausen, and even Charles Ives. Serialism or 12-tone technique, itself explicit, has produced strict notational symbols. Aleatoric music, which allows the performer a much greater freedom of interpretation, has produced more varied and freer notational signs. Some new signs are based on traditional notation; others are entirely new. Composers have sometimes even given different meanings for the same signs. Nevertheless, by now it is possible to see general trends and thus define the use of many new and revised notational symbols. Even though these new signs and devices have rapidly grown in number, it should be noted that a major portion of the serious and popular music of today is still written entirely in traditional notation or with a mixture of signs. Because the music of our twentieth-century composers should be available to braille music readers—along with their sighted counterparts—we must find new braille configurations to transcribe the new print notational devices. Print notation, for example, now includes X- and diamond-shaped note heads and note heads without stems. The duration of notes or groups of notes is often shown in print through horizontal lines that are straight, that rise and fall, or resemble rolls of barbed wire fencing or spider webs. We have no precedents in the code for these examples. It is possible that some kinds of print notation may best be shown through pictorial illustration, but many of the notational devices regularly used by contemporary composers must be transcribed into braille music notation. For example, tone clusters\* were used exten-

\*A tone cluster is "a strongly dissonant group of tones lying close together and produced.



sively by Henry Cowell, Charles Ives, and others in the 1920s. Yet, this now common notational device—in use for over 50 years—has no counterpart in braille music notation. Let us not continue to be that far behind.

The initial group of print symbols that the Music Advisory Committee is considering was selected from the “Index of Notation Symbols” in Gardner Read’s *Music Notation*, 2d edition (Crescendo Publishing Co., 1969), pp. 457–469. The committee has grouped the signs under the following headings: note shapes, duration, tone clusters, pitch approximation, meter, repetition, and nuances. Note shapes, duration, and tone clusters are discussed here; the other topics will be presented in the next *Musical Mainstream* issue. The signs are being submitted for trial use, your consideration, and especially for feedback; they are not official.




### Note Shapes

An awareness of the need to indicate a diamond-shaped note head first came to my attention when I received an “S.O.S.” from a proofreader, saying, “Why would someone write an artificial harmonic in drum music?” The transcriber, upon seeing a note that looked like an artificial harmonic, had used dot 4 in the percussion transcription. Subsequent investigation revealed that in addition to being used to notate the artificial harmonics of string music, diamond-shaped note heads are used in the notation of music for percussion, for percussive effects on string instruments, for pressing piano keys down without sounding, and also for some modern vocal effects. X-shaped notes are also used for numerous purposes.

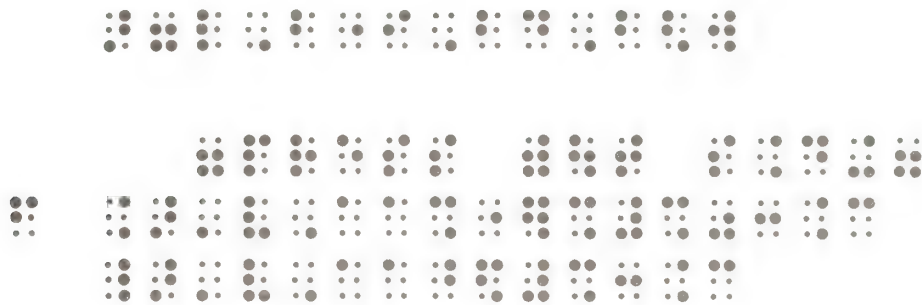
The committee wants to assign braille symbols to indicate a note’s shape since there are a number of common uses for these signs. Please also note that the composer almost always indicates the meaning of all signs in a preface.

Example 1a shows the proposed two-cell signs. These are to precede notes and may be cancelled by repeating the second half of the sign. Example 1b uses three X-shaped notes. Example 1c has chords in which all notes have triangle or diamond shapes to distinguish them from other notes which are to be played and sounded in the normal way.

#### Example 1.

- (a)  Triangle or diamond-shaped note head (except artificial harmonic in string music)
-  X-shaped note head
-  Normal note head with no stem

usually on the piano, by depressing a segment of the keyboard with the fist, forearm or hand.” (Willi Apel, *Harvard Dictionary of Music*, 2d edition, Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1969, p. 856).



smaller-value note groupings such as sixteenths, thirty-seconds, and sixty-fourths are in it usually beamed together with horizontal parallel lines—two parallel lines for sixteenths, three for thirty-seconds, and four for sixty-fourths. One recent notational device beams notes together with the appropriate number of horizontal lines, but makes the lines fan-shaped rather than parallel. The fanned-out horizontal lines mean that the notes are to be performed faster or slower within the duration of that beat or portion of it. For an accelerando, the fan gets wider to the right; for a retardando, the fan closes to the right. Only the performance of notes within the group are affected, not the music as a whole. Example 2a shows the proposed signs for accelerando or retardando within a rhythmic group. These signs would precede a normal Braille grouping sign, if present. The note C, used in Example 2b, represents undesignated pitches for notation written without a staff, for example, as in some percussion music.

Example 2.

⠠⠠ Prefix for accelerando within a rhythmic group

⠠⠠ Prefix for retard within a rhythmic group



## Notation

In traditional music, the fixed temporal units or beats by which the timespan of a piece is measured are indicated by a time signature which shows a basic value—for example, quarter note—and how many of those values are grouped together. For example,  $\frac{3}{4}$  time means the quarter note is the basic value and the equivalent of three quarters are grouped in a measure. This traditional method is based on music written with predominantly bipartite values; for example, halves, quarters, eighths, etc. As rhythmic subtleties increased during this century, the limitations of the traditional system have been uncovered. Sometimes a piece will proceed at different speeds and cannot be coordinated by a common meter; or, if a piece slows down or

accelerates at a precisely controlled speed, traditional notation of the duration will not be capable of illustrating this.

Sometimes a contemporary piece will contain indications of the passage of time with a number printed over a note or rest that indicates how many seconds should elapse for the duration of that note or rest. The committee is suggesting that a word sign should precede the number in braille. The first illustration of Example 3 is fifth octave C to be held for five seconds and followed by a six second rest.

Another new print symbol for time is a short vertical line that may be combined with a number to represent seconds of duration. When this line is placed perpendicular with the staff line, it looks something like a bar line. Dots 4 and 5 are proposed to represent the short vertical line in braille. The dots can be put into a braille music line between spaces or placed above the music line on the first line of a parallel. In Example 3a, the short segment begins fifteen seconds into the piece and continues for four more seconds.

Duration is also often shown in print with horizontal lines above or within the staff extending across the page from the notes or chords to the point where they should stop. These horizontal lines are sometimes thin for notes and thick for chords, or if they represent the continuation of a moving, repetitive passage, they may be a series of rolls or even the spiderweb maze to which I referred earlier. Each of these instances seems to be covered if dots 3-6, 3-6 are used in braille to represent the extension of duration. Duration, of course, must be combined with indications of seconds.

Example 3a is written in a two-line parallel. The top line has the indication of seconds and the bottom line has mezzo forte, crescendo, the two-cell sign for a note without a stem, and fifth octave D. The dashes (dots 3-6, 3-6) that follow, show that the pitch (with its crescendo) continues for four more seconds.

### Example 3

(a) 

(b) 

If you wish to review more examples, write to the author at the address listed at the end of this article, and request a braille copy of "Twentieth Century Notation."




### Tone Clusters

The committee's suggestion for tone clusters is to place a sign between a note and its interval sign showing the extremities of the cluster. Since some clusters are designated for white keys only, some for black keys only, and others for both, three signs are devised, each with accents for the middle character.



Example 4 shows these signs and three very short illustrations. In Example 4b, the tone cluster consists of all of the black keys from third octave A-sharp to fifth octave D-flat. In Example 4c, the cluster involves every note from fifth octave D to fourth octave G. In the full cluster, Example 4d, both forearms are laid on the white keys extending from fifth octave E to first octave C, and this eighth note chord is repeated six more times in the four-measure.

#### Example 4

 Tone cluster for white keys  
 Tone cluster for black keys (flats or sharps)  
 Tone cluster for all notes

The next issue will continue with our suggestions, and the rest is up to you. Do not ignore opportunity to be heard. We hope you will try these suggestions and relay your thoughts to 3ANA committee members: George Bennette (New York Association for the Blind); Tom Jeway (Georgia Academy for the Blind); Sandra Walberg (NLS BPH); Ethel Schuman (subscriber from Woodland Hills, CA); and Bettye Krolick, 602 Ventura Road, Champaign, IL 61820.

# New Music Materials

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The following works are available on loan from the Music Section, National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C. 20542.

Braille and recorded materials may also be purchased from their respective producers. Large-print scores are available on loan only. These listings show, where possible, composer, title, print publisher, producer, and Music Section catalog number.

Materials in the music collection are available on two-month loan, renewable upon request.

## Sources

**HC.** Handcopied braille; available only on loan from the Library of Congress

**RNIB.** Royal National Institute for the Blind, 224 Great Portland Street, London, W1N 6AA, England

**SNB.** Regione Toscana—Stamperia Braille, Istituto Nazionale dei Ciechi “Vittorio Emanuele II,” Via Aurelio Nicolodi n. 2, Postale n. 5/1257, Firenze 50131, Italy

**STBB.** Statens Trykkeri og Bibliotek for Blinde, Ronnegade 1, 2100 Kobenhavn O, Denmark

**VFB.** Verein zur Förderung der Blindenbildung e.V., 26 Bleekstrasse, Hannover-Kirchrode 3000, West Germany

## Braille

### Books

#### Librettos

**Debussy, Claude**

**Pelléas et Mélisande** (English & German) **BRM 26388**

G. Schirmer HC

**Donizetti, Gaetano**

**Don Pasquale** (English & Italian) **BRM 26382**

Raxor Corp. HC

**Strauss, Richard**

**Die Frau ohne Schatten** (English & German) **BRM 26384**

Boosey & Hawkes HC

### Scores

**Choral Singing—Instruction and Study**  
**Torri, A.**

**Facile Metodo di Canto Corale**  
**BRM 26308**

Chiantore SNB

**Choruses, Sacred**

**Buxtehude, Dietrich**

**Send Hid Din Engle, Herre**  
**From** **BRM 25584**

Hansen STBB

**Choruses, Secular**

**Pistone, Pier Giovanni**

**Antologia Corale Classica**  
**Italiana** **BRM 26216**

Paravia SNB

**Chord Music****Bach, Johann Sebastian**

**Clavier-Übung, Fantasia und Fuge**, A-moll  
 contains **Toccatas**, S. 914, E minor; S.  
 915, G minor; and S. 916, G major; and  
**Fantasia und Fuge**, S. 904, A minor

**BRM 26279**

Carisch SNB

**Drums—Studies and Exercises****Bach, Vic****Solo Timpanist: 26 Etudes****BRM 26493**

Carisch HC

**Music****Bach, Johann Sebastian****Concerto**, S. 596, D minor**BRM 26184**

Carisch SNB

**Bach, Marco Enrico****Concertos**, op. 104 (Selections)**BRM 26221**

Carisch SNB

**Bocci, Filippo****Composizioni** **BRM 26326**

Carisch SNB

**Volta di Marce** (collection of marches

for organ or reed-organ by various

composers) **BRM 26281**

Editrice Musica Sacra SNB

**Bernberger, Josef Gabriel****Concerto No. 3**, op. 88, G major**BRM 26222**

Carisch SNB

**Reed-Organ Music**

**Antologia Seconda Liturgica** (100 brief  
 compositions for reed-organ, adapted for the  
 liturgical service) **BRM 26166**  
 Sten SNB

**Piano—Studies and Exercises****Czerny, Carl****20 Studi per Pianoforte** **BRM 26201**

Ricordi SNB

**Piano Music****Albéniz, Isaac Manuel Francisco****Serenata Española**, and, **Suite****Espagnole** **BRM 26289**

Union Musical Española SNB

**Bach, Johann Sebastian****Piccoli Preludii e Fughe****BRM 26290**

Ricordi SNB

**Bartók, Béla****Suite**, op. 14 **BRM 26286**

Universal SNB

**Beethoven, Ludwig van****Für Elise**, from **Bagatelles** **BRM 26297**

Carisch SNB

**Brahms, Johannes****Capriccio**, op. 76, no. 2, B minor**BRM 26240**

Schott SNB

**2 Rhapsodies**, op. 79 **BRM 26291**

Ricordi SNB



**Castelnuovo-Tedesco, Mario**  
**La Sirenetta e il Pesce Turchino**  
**BRM 26296**  
Forlivesi SNB

**Chopin, Frédéric**  
**Sonatas, op. 4, 35, and 58** **BRM 26143**  
Ricordi SNB

**George, Jon**  
**Kaleidoscope Solos, book 2**  
**BRM 26486**  
Alfred HC  
**Kaleidoscope Solos, book 3**  
**BRM 26515**  
Alfred HC  
**Kaleidoscope Solos, book 5**  
**BRM 26504**  
Alfred HC

**Handel, George Frideric**  
**Dodici [i.e. 12] Pezzi** **BRM 26294**  
Ricordi SNB

**Montani, Pietro**  
**Fantasia** **BRM 26293**  
Ricordi SNB

**Mozart, Wolfgang Amadeus**  
**The Young Mozart: Easy Original**  
**Pieces** **BRM 26514**  
Schott HC

**Pace, Robert**  
**Through the Keys: Recital Series**  
**BRM 26506**  
Lee Roberts Music HC

**Pasquini, Bernardo**  
**Toccata sul Canto del Cuculo**  
**BRM 26219**  
Ricordi SNB

**Persichetti, Vincent**  
**Sonatinas, no. 1–3** **BRM 26482**  
Elkan-Vogel HC

**Prokof'ev, Sergei Sergeevich**  
**Music for Children** **BRM 26503**  
MCA Music HC

**Rachmaninoff, Sergei**  
**Moments Musicaux** **BRM 26483**  
International HC

**Reinecke, Karl Heinrich Carsten**  
**Intimità (collection of easy pieces)**  
**BRM 26168**  
Carisch SNB

**Schubert, Franz**  
**Fantasia, D. 760, C major**  
**BRM 26215**  
publisher undetermined SNB

**Zeitlin, Poldi, ed.**  
**The Solo Book: I** **BRM 26489**  
Consolidated Music HC

**Strauss, Johann**  
**Waltzes** **BRM 26185**  
publisher undetermined SNB

enghi, Mario  
ceaux Caractéristiques, op. 41  
M 26250  
sch SNB

y, Donald, ed.  
y First Classics BRM 26502  
sey and Hawkes HC

deufel, Emil  
tzes BRM 26170  
ni-Zerboni SNB

Music, Arranged  
n, Johann Sebastian  
ude and Fugue, S. 532, D major  
(originally for organ) BRM 26174  
tkopf SNB

lbey, Albert William  
Persian Market BRM 26177  
worth SNB

li, Giuseppe  
ctions from Opera Overtures (La  
a del Destino; Nabucodonosor;  
spri Siciliani) BRM 26313  
rdi SNB

Music, Juvenile  
i, Marco Enrico  
m per la Gioventù  
I 26256  
ch SNB

mond, David Leo  
n and Now BRM 26513  
nern Music HC

## Popular Music

I Could Be So Good for You  
BRM 26497  
by Patricia Waterman  
RNIB

Super Trouper BRM 26511  
by Benny Andersson and Bjørn Ulvaeus  
RNIB

The Tide Is High BRM 26510  
by John Holt  
RNIB

Woman in Love BRM 26496  
by Barry Gibb and Robin Gibb  
RNIB

## Violin—Methods

Whistler, Harvey Samuel  
Introducing the Positions, v. 1 (third  
and fifth positions) BRM 26517  
Rubank HC

## Violin—Studies and Exercises

Fiorillo, Federigo  
Etudes, op. 3 BRM 26280  
Ricordi SNB

## Violin and Piano Music

Wieniawski, Henri  
Gigue, and, Légende BRM 26314  
Ries e Erler SNB

## Vocal Music

Bossi, Marco Enrico  
Serenata, from Canti Lirici  
BRM 26288  
Priuli SNB

**Cage, John**  
**Five Songs for Contralto**  
**BRM 26505**  
Henmar Press HC

**Chopin, Frédéric**  
**Polish Songs (Selections)**  
**BRM 26312**  
Ricordi SNB

**Fauré, Gabriel Urbain**  
**En Prière BRM 26512**  
Metzler RNIB

**Floyd, Carlisle**  
**The Mystery BRM 26485**  
Boosey and Hawkes HC

**Ives, Charles Edward**  
**Eleven Songs and Two Harmoni-  
zations BRM 26501**  
Associated Music HC

**Menotti, Gian-Carlo**  
**Steal Me, Sweet Thief from The Old  
Maid and the Thief BRM 26488**  
Franco Colombo HC

**Rorem, Ned**  
**Women's Voices BRM 26480**  
Boosey and Hawkes HC

**Taylor, Bernard, ed.**  
**Contemporary Songs in English**  
**BRM 26492**  
C. Fischer HC

**Vocal Music, Arranged**  
**Verdi, Giuseppe**  
**Cori e arie da opere** (opera choruses  
arranged for voice and piano)  
**BRM 26242**  
publisher undetermined SNB

**Vocal Duets**  
**Brahms, Johannes**  
**Duets, op. 28** (alto, baritone, and  
piano) **BRM 26499**  
Peters HC

## Large Print

### Scores

**Chord Organ, Organ, Piano, or Guitar**  
**Celebrated Favorites LPM 411**  
EZ Play Music. Hal Leonard Publishin  
Corp.  
Ain't Misbehavin'  
Dinah  
Does Your Heart Beat for Me  
For Me and My Gal  
Hey, Mr. Banjo  
I Can't Give You Anything but Love  
I Surrender, Dear  
I've Got the World on a String



ous  
a Smile Be Your Umbrella  
(He's Making Eyes at Me)  
lemoniselle de Paree  
gie  
y Lou  
k-a-bye Your Baby with a Dixie Mel-

Sheik of Araby  
Dust  
et Lorraine  
's My Desire  
n You're Smiling  
's Sorry Now

**at Hits LPM 407**  
EZ Play Music. Hal Leonard Publishing

I Love Her  
t Buy Me Love  
uper to Keep Her  
Tripper  
nor Rigby  
Fool on the Hill  
Back  
ard Day's Night  
Jude  
ollow the Sun  
ou're Ready (Come Go with Me)  
t Be  
elle  
vegian Wood  
here Man  
olin' Rose  
Just Can't Stop It (The Games Peo-  
elay)  
e Lazy-Hazy-Crazy Days of Summer  
h a Hand, Make a Friend  
e Can Work It Out  
erday

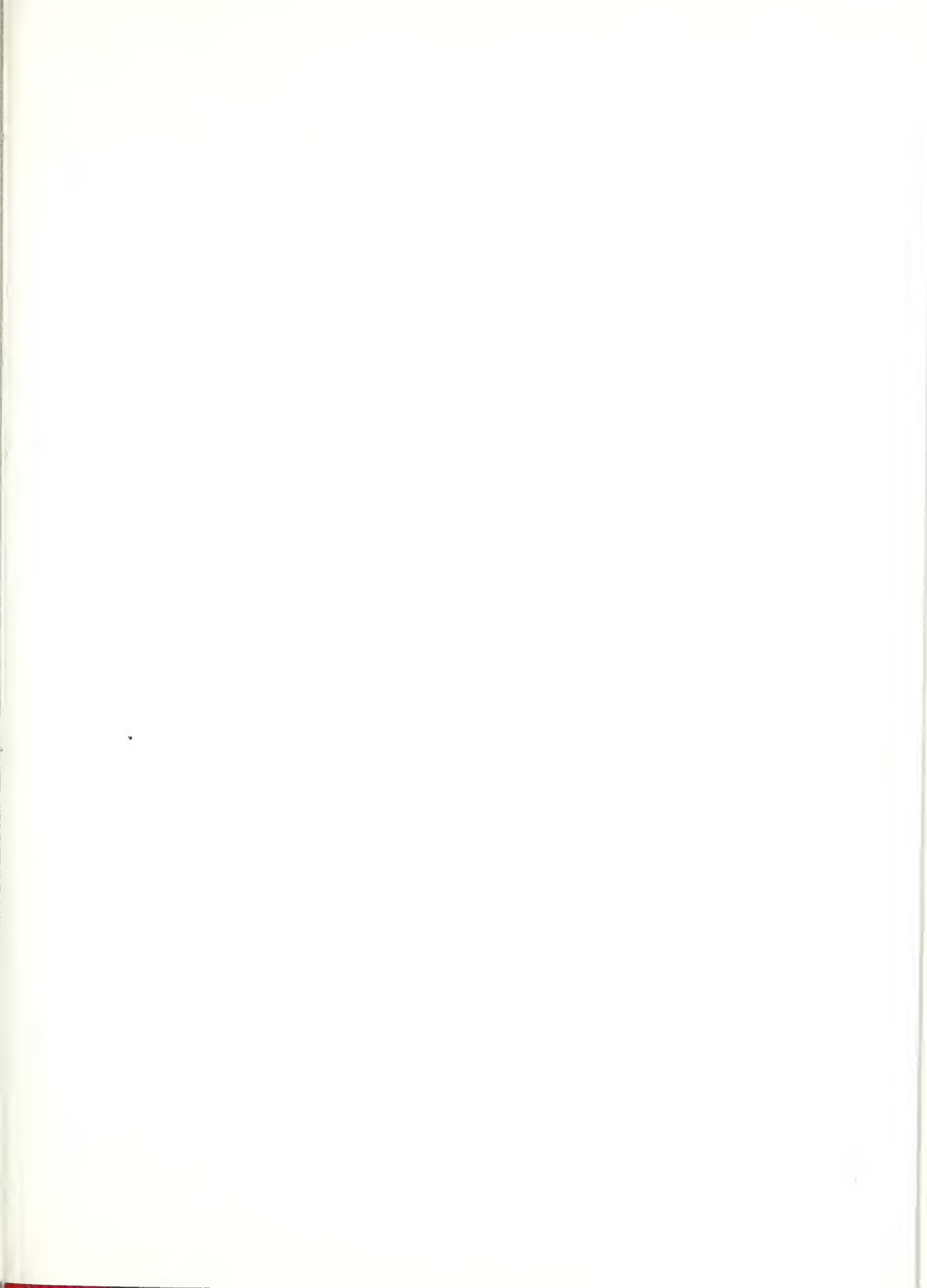
**Hawaiian Songs LPM 405**

EZ Play Music. Hal Leonard  
Publishing Corp.  
Aloha Nui Kuu Ipo  
Aloha Oe  
The Breeze and I  
Harbor Lights  
The Hawaiian Love Call (E Maliu Mai)  
The Hawaiian Wedding Song  
I'll See You in Hawaii  
There Goes Kealoha  
Lovely Hula Girl  
The Moon of Manakoora  
My Island Paradise  
Now Is the Hour  
One More Aloha  
Our Love and Aloha (When the Lurline  
Sails Away)  
Pearly Shells (Pupu o Ewa)  
Quiet Village  
Sea Breeze  
Sleepy Lagoon  
Song of the Islands  
Tiny Bubbles  
You'll Never Go Home

**Top Pops LPM 404**

EZ Play Music. Hal Leonard Publishing  
Corp.  
The Air That I Breathe  
All You Get from Love Is a Love Song  
Break Up to Make Up  
Heartbeat, It's a Lovebeat  
Heaven on the 7th Floor  
Hurting Each Other  
I Want to Hold Your Hand  
Lady Love  
Life Is a Song Worth Singing  
Oh, Babe, What Would You Say?  
One of Those Songs

One Tin Soldier  
Paper Roses  
Puppy Love  
Put Your Hand in the Hand  
Ramblin' Rose  
A Sign of the Times  
Smile, Smile, Smile  
Somethin' Stupid  
They Just Can't Stop It  
Those Lazy-Hazy-Crazy Days of Summer





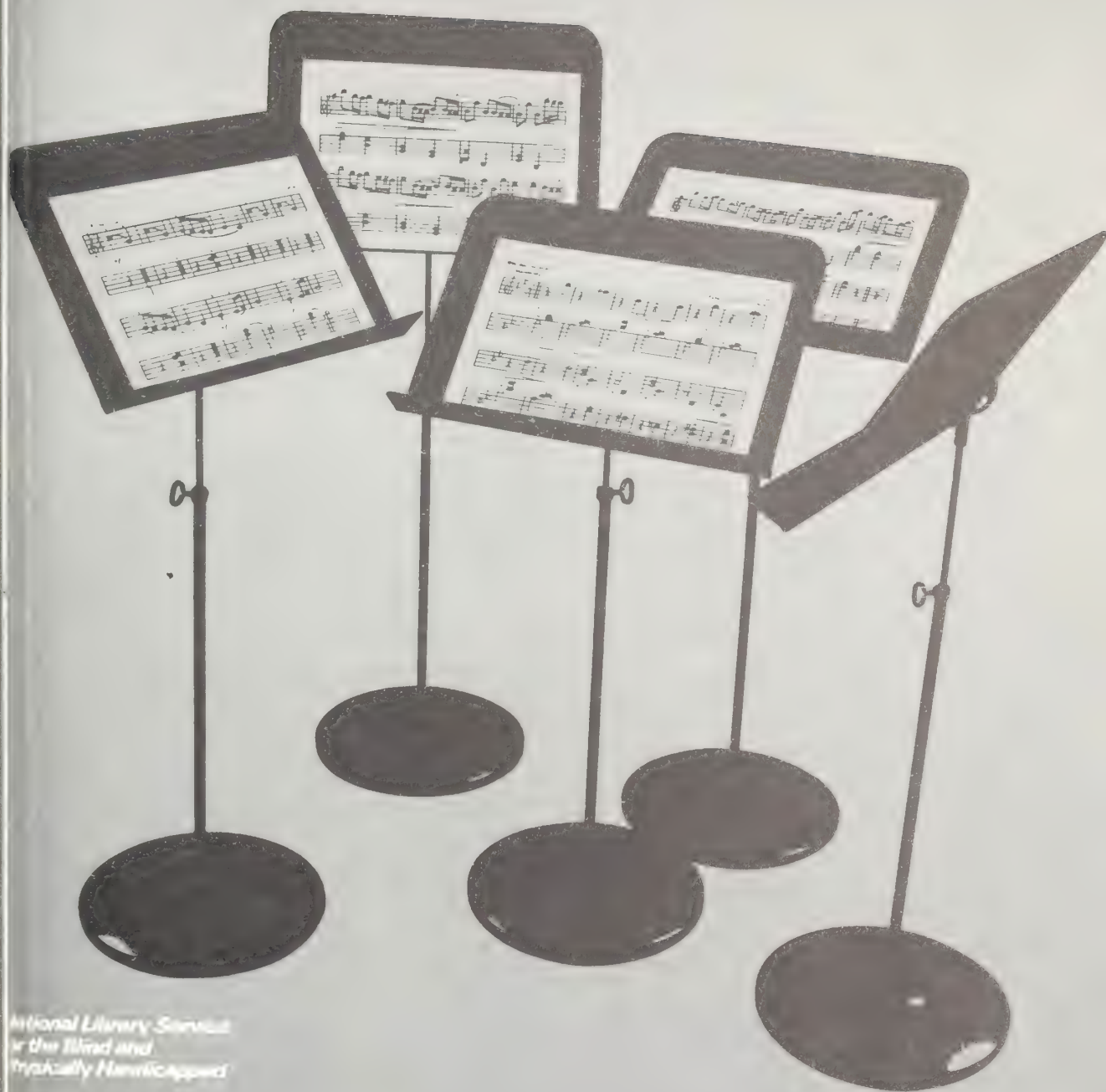


# The Musical Mainstream

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# The Musical Mainstream

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# Announcements

## Exaco—Metropolitan Opera Radio Broadcasts: 1981–82 Season

Date	Opera	On Air (Eastern Time)	Off Air	Inter.	Last Broadcast
81					
Dec. 5	<b>Tosca</b> (Puccini)	2:00	5:00	2	Jan. 26, 1980
Dec. 12	<b>Il Trittico</b> (Puccini)	2:00	5:50	2	Feb. 26, 1977
Dec. 19	<b>Rigoletto</b> (Verdi)	2:00	5:15	2	Jan. 19, 1980
Dec. 26	<b>Madama Butterfly</b> (Puccini)	2:00	5:00	2	Feb. 10, 1979
82					
Jan. 2	<b>Stravinsky Triple Bill</b> ** —Le Rossignol —Le Sacre du Printemps —Oedipus Rex	2:00	5:15	2	First Broadcast
Jan. 9	<b>Hansel and Gretel</b> (Humperdinck)	2:00	4:30	1	Dec. 27, 1980
Jan. 16	<b>La Boheme</b> (Puccini) **	1:30	5:20	3	Dec. 4, 1977
Jan. 23	<b>Luisa Miller</b> (Verdi)	2:00	5:30	2	Jan. 27, 1979
Jan. 30	<b>Tannhaeuser</b> (Wagner)	1:00	5:00	2	Jan. 21, 1978
Feb. 6	<b>Il Trovatore</b> (Verdi)	2:00	5:55	3	Apr. 9, 1977
Feb. 13	<b>Norma</b> (Bellini)	1:00	4:45	2	Mar. 17, 1979
Feb. 20	<b>Verdi Requiem</b> *	2:00	4:20	0	Mar. 28, 1964
Feb. 27	<b>Così Fan Tutte</b> (Mozart) **	2:00	5:20	1	Dec. 20, 1975
Mar. 6	<b>La Traviata</b> (Verdi)	2:00	5:00	2	Mar. 28, 1981
Mar. 13	<b>Il Barbiere di Siviglia</b> (Rossini) **	2:00	5:20	2	Jan. 31, 1976
Mar. 20	<b>I Vespri Siciliani</b> (Verdi)	2:00	5:45	2	Apr. 15, 1975
Mar. 27	<b>Les Contes d'Hoffmann</b> (Offenbach) **	2:00	5:50	2	Feb. 2, 1974
Apr. 3	<b>Abduction from the Seraglio</b> (Mozart)	2:00	5:30	2	Apr. 12, 1980
Apr. 10	<b>Fidelio</b> (Beethoven)	2:00	4:50	1	Feb. 2, 1980
Apr. 17	<b>Parsifal</b> (Wagner)	12:30	5:35	2	Apr. 5, 1980

Pre-Curtain feature at 2:00; opera begins at 2:30

\*New Production; off-air times approximate



### **NLS-Produced Scores Available for Purchase at NBA**

Thermoform copies of about fifty braille music titles recently produced for the NLS Music Section can now be purchased from the National Braille Association Braille Book Bank. For information about purchasing, write to Librarian, N.B.A. Braille Book Bank, 422 Clinton Ave., South, Rochester, NY 14620.

## n Archive of Sound: The Met's Priceless Recorded Heritage

y David Hamilton

Opera News

August 1981

Not long after he invented the phonograph in 1877, Thomas Alva Edison made a list of potential uses for his "writer of sounds." Reproduction of music was only fourth among them, following such purposes as dictating machines and talking books for the blind. Further down the list came "the preservation of languages by exact reproduction of the manner of pronouncing," but it evidently didn't occur to Edison (who was a musician) to put these two ideas together. He had, "the preservation of great musical performances" might have loomed larger in the early days of recording.

It was not until the beginning of the twentieth century that celebrated musicians began frequent recording studios. Even then, the stimulus was not so much the urge to preserve their art for later generations as the hope that these great names would confer prestige on the phonograph, help to sell records and machines. The fact that recordings were, in the literal sense of the word, records—that is, they preserved data—was secondary to their role as objects of entertainment and commerce. As the years

David Hamilton, who has written for the *New Yorker*, the *Nation*, and *Opera News*, is now co-producer with Dorle Soria of the Met's Historic Broadcast Recordings.

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passed, some listeners realized that older, technically outmoded discs and cylinders preserved something irreplaceable—voices and styles from an earlier state of an art that was in a continuing process of evolution. With that realization was begun the hobby of record collecting.

The rise of radio broadcasting in the 1920s eventually combined with recording to yield another kind of musical preservation. Concerts and opera were prime fare for radio stations, which also made instantaneous transcriptions of their transmissions—sometimes for purposes of repeat broadcasts, sometimes simply for internal use. (I have heard it said that a principal reason why American stations made transcriptions was to stave off unfounded damage suits for airborne slander; a consequence was that the recordings were scrapped when the statutory seven-year limit on such litigation ran out.) Here again, preservation of the musical performance was a by-product of, not the principal impetus for, the recording. Many things were not preserved, or were simply destroyed after their usefulness was over.

Still, by one means or another, the surviving by-product of broadcast music from earlier decades has turned out to be vaster and more valuable than anyone imagined. It is sad to contemplate the recordings we know have been lost or destroyed—Toscanini conducting *Fidelio* at Salzburg with Lotte Lehmann, Furtwängler conducting *Parsifal*, Dinu Lipatti playing the *Waldstein* Sonata. But a comparable quantity of broadcast material is already on our shelves, having served as a source for commercial recordings—Toscanini's Verdi operas, Furtwängler's *Ring*, Lipatti's Mozart

Concerto in C Major, K. 467. New things surface regularly: not long ago, the Dutch turned up a recording of Kathleen Ferrier singing Gluck's *Orfeo* that had been thought lost.

The longest continuing series of musical broadcasts in the U.S. is the Saturday-matinee Metropolitan Opera performances, begun in 1931 and since 1940 sponsored by Texaco. Commercial republication of performances from the Met has not been practical, due to the many contractual commitments involved, but in the early 1970s agreement was won from the participating unions and performers to publish in disc form the first of the Texaco broadcasts, *Le Nozze di Figaro*, on December 9, 1940, and offer it as a premium to generous contributors to the Metropolitan Opera Fund. This was so successful that Met Historic Broadcast Recordings have become an annual fixture, with all concerned donating their services and manufacturing costs contributed by RCA Records.

Beginning in 1974, the late Dario Soria, then managing director of the Metropolitan Opera Guild, was producer of this series. In the course of his work he became increasingly aware of the amount of Met broadcast material still in existence, and of its potential value, not only to the Met for fund-raising purposes but to students, historians, and posterity in general. Though since 1950, thanks primarily to the concern of then assistant manager Robert Herman, the Met has kept copies of its current broadcasts, there have been no facilities or procedures for public access to this material.

Soria conceived of an archive where Met broadcasts could be assembled, preserved,

and made available to qualified professionals and researchers. A natural home for such an archive easily suggested itself. Adjoining the Metropolitan Opera House in Lincoln Center, on the third floor of the New York Public Library's Performing Arts Library, stand the Rodgers and Hammerstein Archives of Recorded Sound, opened in 1965. One of the five major audio archives in the United States (the others are at Stanford, Syracuse and Yale Universities, and the Library of Congress in Washington), R & H, as it is familiarly abbreviated, has been directed since 1967 by David Hall, well-known since the 1940s as an author, critic, and record producer, and a longtime advocate of the importance of preserving historic recordings.

In fact that third-floor space, filled with catalogues, reference books, and listening carrels, is only the tip of the R & H iceberg for in the basement of the library building is holdings of recordings—cylinders, discs, wires, tapes—fill a much vaster area, stored under controlled temperature and humidity. It is here that the recordings are actually played, and the sound piped up to the listening booths on the third floor. Rare and frequently requested recordings are usually played in tape transfers made in R & H's sound laboratory, to prevent further wear.

As it happened, the library's Theater Collection already had an agreement with the appropriate unions, permitting it to film opera tape plays and musicals, for historical preservation only, with built-in safeguards against unauthorized or commercial uses. With this as a model, an agreement was drawn up whereby the Met's unions would permit the deposit of recordings of Met broadcasts and telecasts at R & H, for use



the library only, by qualified listeners. Dario Soria died in March 1980, while at work in the Library's sound studios on the historic Broadcast of Verdi's *Un Ballo in maschera*. The impetus he gave the project has been carried forward by his widow, Corle, the Met management and the staff of the Library. With the cooperation of the American Federation of Musicians, Local 2 of the AFM, the American Guild of Musical Artists, and the Theatrical Protective Union (Local No. 1), the Metropolitan Opera Audio-Visual Archives have been established as part of the Rodgers and Hammerstein Archives. Beginning this fall, recordings of all Met broadcasts between the move to Lincoln Center in 1966 and the present will become available for study. As time, equipment, and funding permit, the collection will be extended backward in time to cover all available broadcasts, and perhaps also the Met telecasts. As "use copies" made from the Met's master material, the latter will be placed in secure, controlled master-tape vault storage. Along with this, a campaign will be undertaken to fill gaps in the archives. Many pre-1950 broadcasts have survived in other collections. For example, the Voice of America and Armed Forces Radio at various times made transcriptions for rebroadcasting overseas, and many of these have found their way to the Library of Congress. Over the years, others have surfaced in private hands, some evidently copied from network states, others from privately made transcriptions, often made for artists who wanted a record of their work. The Historic Broadcast of *Madama Butterfly*, for example, was taken from acetates in Licia Albanese's col-

lection. Several seasons in the late 1930s and early 1940s are well documented already, and it is hoped that as many as half of the pre-1950 broadcasts can be located in whole or in part.

In dealing with these earlier decades, prior to the general availability of tape recording, one finds that source material often survives in less than optimum condition or may have been of less than professional quality to begin with. Here, the R & H sound studio and the services of its sound engineer, Tom Owen, will play an important role. Working with Met material will not be new to Owen, an award-winning engineer and producer who now specializes in the restoration and transfer of old recordings. It was he who prepared the source material for the most recent Historic Broadcasts, using an awesome array of sophisticated equipment and a healthy store of practical experience and common sense.

Selectively lit by spotlights (to minimize induced hum), the R & H audio laboratory resembles a cave, dominated on one side by two high racks of equipment, on the other by a bank of disc and cylinder playback devices, and in the center by a mixing panel. The science of sound restoration has advanced steadily in recent years along two main lines—first, learning more about early recording procedures and equipment, and second, developing new processing equipment that can minimize the distortions inherent in various recording systems. Over the years, many different sizes and shapes of cutting stylus were used, and Owen has a brigade of corresponding playback styli. A magical device known as a "real-time spectrum analyzer" provides an instant graphic

display of the recorded signal's frequency content, and it will hold such a display for comparison with the results obtained by another stylus, thus providing objective confirmation of what was previously essentially a process of hunch or trial and error.

Even before that, the physical condition of the source material must be attended to, with record-cleaning machines and chemicals to treat the surface. Variable-speed turntables are a must; 78 rpm was often merely the nominal speed of shellac discs, and even LP records have been known to run at the wrong speed. There are equalizers to match the original recording curve, filters to remove sonic defects, such as hums, rumbles, and thumps, with minimal loss of musical signal, and an ingenious machine called the Packburn Transient Noise Suppressor, which compares both sides of a record groove and passes only the quieter.

There's a particular appropriateness in the location of the Met's Audio-Visual Archive at R & H, which brings us to another aspect of Met documentation in sound. Among the earliest of all actual-performance recordings are the fabled cylinders made by Lionel Mapleson at the Met between 1901 and 1903, which were eventually acquired by the library. So Jean de Reszke, Emma Eames, Marcella Sembrich, and others will be joined by their colleagues from later decades. What is more, the Mapleson cylinders themselves are about to take a new lease on life, for in recent months, with the acquisition of a new state-of-the-art machine for electronic playback of cylinder recordings, Hall and Owen have begun a comprehensive transfer of the Mapleson legacy (some of it never before published at any speed, such as a Gadski

"Dich, teure Halle'"), using the most sophisticated modern techniques.

No window on the operatic past has been more fascinating—or more frustrating—than the Maplesons. Some of them, recorded from the prompter's box (a tight squeeze for Mapleson, his machine, *and* the prompter) are close and vividly recorded, but most singers objected to the noisy machine, so Mapleson was relegated to the flies, often with much dimmer results. Playback speed is inconsistent, to say the least. Mapleson identified the cylinders with slips of paper which over the years have sometimes been interchanged or lost; some can probably never be conclusively identified. Some cylinders are cracked or otherwise deformed.

Yet there is no other way for us to hear what Jean de Reszke, nonpareil tenor of the 1890s, sounded like, or Milka Ternina, the great Isolde and teacher of Zinka Milanov. Other singers often projected much more vividly in the theater than they did under the difficult conditions of the early recording studio: a particularly famous Mapleson, of the cabaletta to the Queen's aria from *Les Huguenots*, is ascribed to Nellie Melba (though the attribution has been contested) and reveals singing of an abandoned virtuosity hardly to be found in her placid studio work.

The R & H Mapleson project proceeds with the careful pace demanded by perfectionism. Hall carries the cylinders from their original container to the playback machine in a cushioned breadbasket. Cracked originals are held together on the spindle with rubber bands and are taped several times, with the rubber bands in different places, to get the best playback of each section (the parts w

be spliced together later). Owen has been carrying on research into the properties of wax cylinder recording systems, even making some new recordings using the old system for comparative purposes, and that knowledge is applied to decisions about stylus size, equalization, and the like. Sometimes nothing seems to help much, and the signal remains resolutely faint—"a real basket case" is the engineer's phrase for the worst of them. At this stage, speed and pitch are not primary concerns; they will be deter-

mined later, and the tape playback speed adjusted. When everything has been played, transferred, pitched, and restored to Hall's and Owen's satisfaction, a complete publication of the Maplesons on LP is planned, including even the unidentified excerpts, which will doubtless become a favorite parlor game among record collectors.

With these several projects under way, the good news is that the Met's audible history is in ever improving condition as its centennial approaches.



### I Gave Them an Earful

by Gary Graffman

*Virtuoso and Keyboard Classics*

July–August 1981

Founded in 1939 to honor the memory of Edgar M. Leventritt, a music-loving lawyer, this competition was distinctive during those days in at least two ways. To begin with, there was no cash prize. This, however, did not diminish its lure, for the orchestras with which the winner would play were temptation enough. It included such plums as Cleveland, Chicago, and the New York Philharmonic Symphony. The Leventritt's second distinction was a "fail-safe" device: If its jury didn't feel that any of the contestants, no matter how gifted, were mature enough to cope with the problems of playing with these orchestras or, as they put it, ready to embark on a full-scale career, it was not committed to give any prize at all. Conversely, on the rare occasions that more than one contestant exhibited those qualities the judges deemed worthy, they were free to award more than one prize. There was, however, no such thing as a second or third prize. The Leventritt award was either given, or it was not.

The contestants were not supposed to be battling it out against each other to see who among them was "best," but, rather, against a standard of excellence and ripeness determined by the discriminating board of

judges, themselves musicians of unimpeachable standards—Rudolf Serkin and, until their deaths, George Szell and William Steinberg almost always figuring prominently among them. For this reason, the mere fact that a Leventritt Competition took place didn't necessarily mean that the result would be another Leventritt award winner.

By 1949 Eugene Istomin had already been a winner, as had Sigi (now Alexis) Weissenberg, whom I had recently met and whose playing I admired. I had few concerns and very little to lose by entering the Leventritt.

That summer I diligently prepared the required repertoire—three concertos and a great deal of solo music—for the contest, which was to take place in early fall. My friend Leon Fleisher did yeoman service by paying house calls to my family apartment several times a week to play the orchestra part of the concertos on our second piano. Leon's playing was extremely beautiful, with the most natural phrasing. He was also a marvelous sight reader and chamber music player. One of Schnabel's students, Leon was almost exactly my age, and he already enjoyed some professional success: Montex had engaged him to play with the Philharmonic when he was sixteen or so and thus he, too, was in that small group of youngsters who had the privilege of appearing with a few of our most distinguished orchestra institutions.

For relaxation, we played a lot of four hand music. Then Leon would graciously listen—as did everyone else I could buttonhole—to the solo works I was preparing. Although he occasionally offered suggestions (which, after all, was the po

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From the book, *I Really Should Be Practicing*, by Gary Graffman. © 1981 by Gary Graffman. All rights reserved. Used with permission.

of his listening), he didn't do so nearly as readily as Eugene, for whom I also played. Part of this was probably Leon's reticent personality, but also I suppose the three-year age difference between Eugene and me, which seemed so great then, had a good deal to do with Eugene's unstinting criticism. In any case, practically every evening Leon faithfully appeared, seated himself at the second piano, and we would attack Prokofiev, Brahms, and Rachmaninoff.

Summer in New York in the years before air conditioning meant that there was a good deal of sweat over and above the normal amount engendered by playing concertos. The windows were always flung wide to catch any breeze that might dry our dripping faces. As a result, other open windows caught more than stray sounds that emanated from my parents' living room. I am amazed that nobody called the police. (Unbeknownst to us, though, the Druzinskys, a family of musicians whose apartment was just across the court from ours and who were acquaintances of my parents and thus knew what was going on, were following our progress avidly—how could they help it?—although they had no idea who my colleague was. The following year, when Eugene and I were spending a few days in Marseilles, we met Dorothy Druzinsky, who was bicycling from North Africa to Paris. We suggested that she look up our friend Leon, who was living there at the time. She took our advice, married him, and subsequently found out that it was he who had contributed mightily to keeping her awake during that long hot summer of 1949.)

The opening sessions of the Leventritt took place in a little auditorium of what was

then the Steinway Building, appropriately called Steinway Hall. (At that time the Steinway Building housed not only the offices of the piano company but nearly all of the music business offices of New York, including Columbia Concerts [later Columbia Artists Management] and the New York Philharmonic Symphony. The address was 113 West Fifty-seventh Street. When the Steinways sold the building several years later to the Manhattan Life Insurance Company, its number was changed to 111 forthwith.)

The Steinway Building's 13 was not unlucky for me that fall, though. When my turn came to play, I started, as was customary, with the pieces of my choice. (In the Leventritt, as in some other competitions, the contestant is permitted to begin with a work of his own selection. Thereafter, he does what he is told.) My choice was no less than the Brahms Concerto No. 1 (with the Fleisher Philharmonic at the second piano). The judges let me play the first movement all the way through. That was it. When I called in at the designated time to see if I'd passed the first round, I was told that I'd play at the finals in Carnegie Hall.

"But there is something I have to explain to you that may seem rather odd," I was told by the Leventritt spokeswoman. "There will be no semi-finals." Pause. "And you're going to be the only finalist."

"I see," I said, not seeing at all.

"You must understand, though, that your chances of winning are no better or no worse just because nobody else is in the finals."

"I understand," I said, not understanding, really.

"Remember, you're not competing



against anyone in this contest.” (There was that invisible, evanescent standard again.)

“You must be prepared to play any of the repertoire that the judges may request, and for as long as they want to listen,” she continued. “It may be for an hour or even longer, if they wish. Then, when they’ve heard enough, they will decide either to give you the prize or not to give you the prize. Is that perfectly clear?”

I nodded at the phone and hung up, feeling perfectly confused.

At Carnegie Hall the next day there were, besides the judges, a few hundred curious listeners. (As I recall, Mrs. Leventritt at that time never actively invited an audience to the finals, but she never kept any interested people away, either.) Again I was allowed to start with the music of my choice, so I continued through the second and third movements of the Brahms concerto. Nothing was going to deter me from playing the whole damned piece! Then I was asked to play the Beethoven Opus 109 Sonata. This was followed, in rapid succession, by about half of the Schumann *Carnaval*; a Bach prelude and fugue; some Debussy; the Paganini-Liszt *La Campanella*; one or two other short pieces; and a movement each of the Rachmaninoff Second and Prokofiev Third concertos.

Leon’s performance of the orchestral parts was extraordinary, and I later heard that one of the judges proposed giving *him* the prize.

I don’t remember what I did when I was finally told, “Enough!” I may have mingled with my friends in the audience or just brooded in a corner, but I recall that after a certain amount of time had elapsed—maybe a year or two, it seemed—the judges shuf-

fled out onstage looking sheepish and somebody eventually mumbled something about my having won. It was all so vague and offhand that it could even be that there was no announcement at all, and that somebody who saw me hanging around told me to go up on stage. Anyway, the sheepish-looking judges congratulated me, one by one, and one of them said to me, “Actually, we have decided to give you the prize as soon as you finished the Brahms, but we were enjoying ourselves, so we just let you go on and on.” I don’t know how true this was, or whether he was just making conversation, but there is no doubt that I gave them an earful that afternoon.

George Szell then discussed what I would play with him in Cleveland a few months later (it turned out to be the Beethoven Third), Steinberg asked for Chopin in Buffalo, and Arthur Judson advised me that the correct amount of time had now elapsed since my divorce from Hurok, and he would add me to his list. Where Hurok’s roster had been graced by the name of Rubinstein, Judson’s was then headed by that of Heifetz. In addition, he handled just about all the conductors worth playing with as well as the New York Philharmonic Symphony. Legend has it that this conflict of interest made it natural for Judson artists to appear most frequently with those conductors and that orchestra. If this was in fact the case, I never became one of those so favored; it later seemed to me, indeed, that he bent over backward to make sure that I didn’t have many of the sought-after engagements. But at the moment of winning the Leventritt award, all this was far in the future.



## Kurt Weill: A Composer for Our Times

by Allan Kozinn

*Ovation*

July 1981

The musical world has a curious, almost Darwinian way of selecting those composers who will enter that pantheon of masters whose works make up the standard repertoire. It is a process in which a composer's standing during his lifetime does not always weigh heavily. Many composers who were relatively obscure in their day have come to be regarded as the possessors of great, innovative voices; while many of their more temporarily celebrated colleagues are now historical footnotes. Instead, the survival of the fittest in this case has more to do with the music's ability to speak to listeners over long periods of time. Thus, election to immortal composer status often involves posthumous cycles of eclipse, revival, and appraisal, all of which bear fruit when audiences and performers agree that a composer's statements are timeless—or, at least, that his music makes rewarding listening. In the last few years, many people have come to these conclusions about the music of Kurt Weill. Why Weill? There are all kinds of theories about the current blossoming of Weill's popularity, an explosion that has taken the form of several major revivals of his operas; two published biogra-

phies with a few more on the way; American premieres of Weill's early instrumental works, songs, and choral settings; and a few new recordings. Some of these theories have political and socioeconomic overtones, while others take a more practical, musical tack. Perhaps the simplest explanation is that as more of Weill's music is brought before the public, listeners who had known him only through a few perennials from *The Threepenny Opera* and *Mahagonny* have come to realize the variety and scope of his work, as well as the originality of his style. If you listen, for example, to Weill's two symphonies, his violin concerto, or *Das Berliner Requiem*, you'll hear the same kind of trenchant, sharp-edged, and at times acidic writing that makes the better known *Threepenny Opera* and *Mahagonny* stand out as twentieth-century operatic masterpieces. If Stravinsky, Copland, and Milhaud had brief flirtations with jazz and dance music, Weill allowed popular elements to become a consistent part of his idiom. And particularly in works of his German (pre-1933) period, Weill's orchestration, marked by an affinity for wind writing, is as distinctive as his melodic and harmonic invention is poignant.

For the uninitiated, a capsule history. Born in Dessau, Germany in 1900, Weill was composing by the time he was ten and working as an accompanist in the theater when he was 15. His father, Albert Weill, was a cantor at Dessau's synagogue and had published some of his own settings of Hebrew psalms; his mother was a pianist. At 18, Weill went to the Hochschule für Musik in Berlin to study composition more formally, and three years later he became a student of Ferruccio Busoni, who thought enough of

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Allan Kozinn is a frequent contributor to publications on music and the arts. © 1981 *Ovation*. All rights reserved. Used with permission.

Weill's music to recommend it to Universal Editions for publication. By the late 1920s, Weill had emerged as a luminary of the Berlin theater, having scored a significant success with *Der Protagonist*, the first of four operas written with expressionist playwright Georg Kaiser between 1924 and 1933.

In 1927, Weill began an even more fruitful collaboration with Bertolt Brecht. The team produced *Threepenny Opera*, *Happy End*, *Der Jasager*, and *Mahagonny*, as well as several exquisite songs and choral works. But the relationship was a rocky one, and after 1930 they worked together only once: on *The Seven Deadly Sins*, written in Paris in 1933, the year they left Germany to escape Nazi persecution. Weill worked in Paris for two years before moving to New York, where he turned his energies to the Broadway stage. He died only 15 years after arriving in America; yet during that brief spell he quickly assimilated the language of Broadway and turned out a string of musicals that includes *Johnny Johnson*, *Knickerbocker Holiday*, *Lady in the Dark*, *One Touch of Venus*, and *Love Life*, along with the more ambitious and sophisticated operas, *Street Scene* and *Lost in the Stars*.

Possibly because of his Broadway successes, his insistent use of jazz, blues, dance, and folk elements, or even because a few of his songs—"Mack the Knife," "Moon of Alabama," and "September Song," most notably—became pop standards, much of the musical establishment has frowned on Weill as merely a fine melodic craftsman but not really a "serious" composer. Arnold Schoenberg went so far as to say of Weill that "his is the only music in the world in which I can find no quality at

all." Yet there have been a few spokesmen for Weill among the more perceptive. Critic Andrew Porter, for one, has long been a Weill champion and has likened his influence on American opera to Handel's on that of England. Aaron Copland, in *What to Listen For in Music*, cautions his readers, "Do not be fooled by Weill's banality. It is a purposeful and meaningful banality if one can read between the lines, as it were, and sense the deep tragedy hidden in its carefree quality."

Of course, Weill's music has not been entirely neglected since his death in 1950. The mid-50s saw the famous Marc Blitzstein version of *Threepenny Opera* at New York's Theater de Lys and a series of recordings that includes several of Weill's German and American stage works. Most of these are still available (on the CBS, Odyssey, and Columbia Special Products labels). Those that include Lotte Lenya, the composer's widow and the creator of many of his leading female roles, are considered definitive performances, while several others in the series remain the only recordings of those works in the catalog. Lenya has worked tirelessly to keep her husband's music alive, appearing in the Blitzstein *Threepenny*, directing the Columbia disc series, and encouraging younger performers to add Weill's music to their repertoires.

But the real Weill boom didn't start until about 1976, when Joseph Papp staged *The Threepenny Opera* at Lincoln Center's Beaumont Theater. That production coincided with an extensive exhibition of Weill and Lenya memorabilia at the Lincoln Center Library for the Performing Arts. In New York alone, the following seasons saw a



production of *Happy End* starring Meryl Streep in Brooklyn; a concert version of *Knickerbocker Holiday* at Town Hall; Weill's first incursion into the Metropolitan Opera, the 1979 production of *Mahagonny*; the return of *Street Scene* to the New York City Opera repertoire; and the American premiere of *Silverlake*, the last opera Weill composed in Germany, by the same company.

The Weill renaissance was not confined to New York or, for that matter, to the concert and theater stage. Robert Brustein has staged several Brecht-Weill works at Yale University over the years; and when he moved to Harvard and started the American Repertory Theater, he made *Happy End* the centerpiece of his first season. College campuses around the country have increasingly played host to Kurt Weill evenings, whether in the form of Martha Schlamme's Kurt Weill Cabaret (which she's been giving with some success since the early 1960s) or in homegrown productions such as that mounted last spring by Wayne State University, in Detroit, a program that boasted a nonsinging appearance by Lotte Lenya. Julius Rudel, whose involvement with Weill goes back to the 1958 City Opera production of *Lost in the Stars*, recently led the Buffalo Philharmonic in what he calls "a Weill minifestival," and he brought the beautiful but rarely played Second Symphony to Carnegie Hall last season. Both the Met's *Mahagonny* and City Opera's *Street Scene* have been nationally televised, and last year's *Silverlake* was recorded digitally by Nonesuch, and released this past fall. In November a special Weill symposium and concert was held at the Kennedy Center.

Watching a composer's transition from cult popularity to mass appeal is always fascinating, but it also raises some questions. Why, for example, has it taken until now for Weill's music to find its way to performers and companies willing to program it? And what are listeners hearing in this music that evaded them for almost 30 years?

Teresa Stratas hadn't given Weill much thought until the Met asked her to sing Jenny in *Mahagonny*, but she has since become an ardent fan. According to her, Weill's appeal is in his emotional directness. "I reacted more strongly to Jenny," she says, "than to any other role I've sung, including Lulu and Salome, and I think that's because Weill's music comes so close to the core of human experience. I'm not talking about Brecht's lyrics now, just the music. He deals at all times with honest emotions, without sentimental frills or protective coatings. And he has an incredible way of showing us ourselves in totality—what we like and dislike about ourselves, our strengths and weaknesses. People don't always like to look that closely at what the soul is feeling. But there is such dignity in this music that you come away after an evening of Weill feeling very cleansed."

Kim Kowalke's *Kurt Weill in Europe* not only chronicles the composer's first thirty-five years but also includes a detailed musical analysis, a descriptive catalog of works, and translations of Weill's essays on music. Kowalke was drawn to investigate what he calls the "mystifying uniqueness" of Weill's style. "With Hindemith and Schoenberg," he explains, "the compositional systems are spelled out very clearly. But Weill never wrote about how he com-



posed. It was all very intuitive; yet when you hear four bars of Weill you *know* it's Weill. His signature is as unique as Mozart's or Beethoven's. But the puzzle of how his compositional procedure leads to that is something I set out to address in my book, and I'm still trying to unravel it." A professor of music at Occidental College, in Los Angeles, Kowalke wrote *Kurt Weill in Europe* as his doctoral thesis and has therefore taken a scholarly approach that—fascinating as the material is—may put off more general readers. He is considering writing the logical sequel, *Kurt Weill in America*, which he says would be in a more popular style.

Meanwhile, Ronald Sanders has published *The Days Grow Short*, the first popularly-oriented biography of Weill, covering the composer's entire life. "When I started the book four years ago," says Sanders, "I had no idea that this revival would be in the air. I've long been interested in both classical and popular music, and I sensed that this would be a good subject. To tell the truth, I had known Weill, like most people, primarily as Brecht's collaborator. But when I went to the Papp production of *The Threepenny Opera*, I noticed something strange: I had a feeling, which my wife and some friends shared, that through the stretches of Brechtian dialogue we found ourselves waiting for the music to begin again. Looking at it now, and considering the quality of Weill's work without Brecht, I've come to feel that Brecht's role has been overstated and that Weill was the superior artist. Not that my book expresses loud critical opinions; but I think it restores some balance on that score."

Robert Brustein tends to agree with Sanders. "Brecht never truly realized himself except as a collaborator with Weill," he says. "But for many years, their works were not popular here because people preferred the high-kicking *Oklahoma* sort of musical. Why are the Brecht-Weill works so popular now? I think it may have to do with the fact that something has happened to America in the last fifteen years. We've gone through some disillusioning political and cultural changes, and perhaps people are finding Weill's music more acceptable now because it embodies this disillusionment in its sardonic, cynical lyricism."

One popular theory along these lines has to do with what some observers see as a fascination with Weimar and Nazi Germany, reflected not only in the revival of Weill's works from this time but also in recent film theater, and television offerings. Some—including Beverly Sills, Kim Kowalke, and Teresa Stratas—suggest that this trend may be tied to perceived cultural and economic similarities between Weimar Germany and 1980s America. Others, like Ronald Sanders, who taught twentieth-century European history before embarking on his Weill book and Otto Friedrich, author of *Before the Deluge: A Portrait of Berlin in the 1920s*, feel that claims of such similarities are overdrawn, pointing out that the restless '60s had more in common with Weimar than the present does.

Still, as Brustein pointed out, the Brecht-Weill works are filled with the sense of political upheaval that characterized the '20s. And some of the musicians who perform Weill's abstract works from that era will tell you that the music conveys that feeling at

least as strongly as do the texts that Weill used for his songs and operas. Richard Young, who has been playing Weill's Violin Concerto (1924) around the country, says that he'd be "hard pressed to find a work that more clearly conveys what it must have been like to live in Germany at that time. The piece is filled with so many conflicting emotions—elements of a wide-eyed innocence that quickly changes to cynicism, suspicion, and fear. Whether or not this is intentional, we'll never know, and critics may argue that he was searching for a style and unable to write with a consistent thread of expression. But I can't help but believe that when a work moves so freely between sheer beauty and sheer terror, it's not just a case of compositional immaturity."

Lys Symonette, a director of the newly organized Kurt Weill Foundation in New York and the creator of a set of new English lyrics for the City Opera's *Silverlake*, also feels that a significant part of Weill's appeal lies in his ability to mirror his times. Symonette came to the United States as a refugee in 1936 and worked on most of Weill's Broadway productions as a rehearsal pianist and vocal coach. She first came to Weill's music, though, as a young girl in Mainz.

"For us," she recalls, "Weill's music was the protest music of the day. In works like *The Threepenny Opera* and *Mahagonny* he and Brecht used language that had not been heard on the stage before. They spoke out against our narrow-minded, self-satisfied, over-fed bourgeois society that didn't know where to turn for the next thrill, while all around us there was extreme poverty. Today we have many of these same problems: overcrowded cities, the evils of

money, the worship of materialism. And I think Weill's treatment of all this strikes a responsive chord right now. He was able to be cynical but, at the same time, hopeful. In *Silverlake*, for instance, he brings us to the conclusion that even in the face of hunger and greed, the real reason people cannot get along is that they hate and fear each other. And as we see at the end of the opera, if hate and fear can be overcome, we can walk on ice in the middle of summer—it's that simple."

*Silverlake*, the most recent addition to the Weill stage repertory and discography, is an adaptation of one of the composer's collaborations with Georg Kaiser. The original *Silbersee* was a tragically pivotal work in his career. Shortly after its simultaneous opening in Leipzig, Magdeburg, and Erfurt, in February 1933, the Nazis ordered *Silbersee* closed, banning all performances of Weill's music and labeling the composer a subversive cultural Bolshevik whose works were the quintessence of decadence. Looking back, it's easy to see why the Jewish composer's music drew the fire of Hitler and Goebbels: Weill drew freely from American black-based jazz—music as non-Aryan as can be. Nor was his choice of texts much to the Fuehrer's liking. A year before *Silbersee*, Weill composed *Die Buergschaft*, a pessimistic work about the loss of human values in a totalitarian system. And in *Silbersee*, a song called "Caesars Tod" ("Caesar's Death") preached that dictators who "live by the sword die by the dagger," a moral taken as an attack on Germany's newly appointed chancellor.

Weill and Lenya escaped from Germany less than three weeks after *Silbersee* was

closed, and except for a few songs the opera sank into oblivion. One problem was Kaiser's libretto, which, according to Lys Symonette, was "archaic." When former City Opera director Julius Rudel suggested staging the work with a new libretto, Kaiser's heirs protested. However, Harold Prince was brought in as director, that protest evaporated, and a revised libretto, based on the Kaiser original, was constructed by Hugh Wheeler and Lys Symonette. The new score also incorporates some music that Weill composed for a 1927 production of Strindberg's *Gustav III*.

It may well be that we find the political progressiveness of Weill's operas attractive and refreshing today. But those who knew the composer warn that his affinity for social causes should not be interpreted as a specific political stand. "He was a liberal," Lotte Lenya says, "and people who are liberals are always called communists. But Kurt was no communist. Do you know why he stopped working with Brecht? Because he told Brecht, 'I don't want to compose *Das Kapital*.'"

Just as Weill began to lose patience with Brecht's increasingly militant Marxism, Brecht began to feel that Weill's brilliantly orchestrated scores were stealing attention from his texts, and he accused Weill of being "a phony Richard Strauss" and "a composer of petty-bourgeois opera." Few who have looked into Weill's music find either description particularly apt, although some admit that his Broadway scores are rather more complacent than his German works.

What struck Teresa Stratas about Weill is his emotional directness. "There are several places in *Mahagonny*," she says, "where

one line can be sung many ways—lyrically and sadly, nonchalantly, very hard and cold, or with bitterness. And in some of these places, Weill repeats the same line with the same music a few times. Now, in a score like *La Boheme*, a certain kind of melody automatically suggests a specific interpretation. But when I was thinking about what to do with some of Weill's repeated lines, it suddenly hit me that I could do them *all* those ways."

After her success in *Mahagonny*, Stratas agreed to sing some of Weill's nonoperatic songs at a Whitney Museum concert. Several were given to her by Lenya and Symonette and had not been heard before in this country. In fact, part of the function of the Kurt Weill Foundation is to find music of Weill's that has gone unperformed and give it to musicians willing to bring it to life. Unfortunately, a good deal of Weill's early music—including three one-act operas, some symphonic works, and all his piano music—was lost or destroyed during World War II. In a few cases, only fragments and sketches exist, and these were woven into performing editions by Lys Symonette and British scholar David Drew.

But the process of reclaiming Weill's prodigious output is a slow one, and Weill himself complicated matters by showing no interest in his German works after he came to New York. For that matter, according to Symonette and Lenya, he refused to speak German again and insisted that his name be pronounced "while," not "vial." He made his feelings especially clear in a letter to *Lij* magazine in 1947. After thanking the editor for their kind words about *Street Scene*, he went on to voice "a gentle beef about one c



our phrases. Although I was born in Germany, I do not consider myself a 'German composer.' The Nazis obviously did not consider me as such either, and I left their country (an arrangement which suited both me and my rulers admirably) in 1933."

In New York, Weill immediately immersed himself in American music, spending much of his time in theaters and jazz clubs, and studying everything from minstrel shows to riverboat and railway songs. The archives of the Kurt Weill Foundation contain several volumes of American folk songs that Weill used as primers. As his music from this era shows, he learned quickly, prompting the late theater director Harold Clurman to remark that "If Weill was shipwrecked in the land of the Hottentots, he'd become their best composer within two years." One important influence was George Gershwin, whose *Porgy and Bess*, wrote Weill, "convinced me that the American theater was already on the way to the more integrated form of musical that we had begun to attempt in Europe." Believing that the opera house was a museum for the performance of nineteenth-century music, and that Broadway held the attention of the broadest audience, Weill began working toward an ideal that he called "Broadway opera."

With *Street Scene* he felt that he had succeeded, and according to Lenya that work's warm reception was "one of the happiest moments of his life." Nevertheless, Weill was unable to escape the prevalent categorization that separates "serious" opera from "light" Broadway composition, and within a few years of his death all but a few of his works faded from view. Among the

first to rebel against the dismissal of Weill as a Broadway tunesmith was Julius Rudel. "I suppose the general neglect of Weill is partly due to snobbism," he concedes, "but I have never believed in that vague dividing line between opera and theater. Besides, this man who 'succumbed to Broadway'—and I say that in quotes—has succeeded better than anyone in the second half of this century in taking a folk song or a popular dance form and elevating it so completely, just as Mozart, Beethoven, and Mahler had done." Rudel's colleague, conductor Lukas Foss, who has recorded some of Weill's music and who plans to perform his only French work, *Marie Galante*, with the Brooklyn Philharmonia, concurs, calling Weill's use of popular materials "a political statement in itself—namely, shouldn't our art become popular?"

Perhaps the problem has been that Weill was ahead of his time in blending traditional and popular elements. As a student of Ferruccio Busoni in his early twenties, Weill wrote in the atonal language that has prevailed as the predominant idiom of serious contemporary music, but by the time he was twenty-five, he had turned against it in favor of a language that could accommodate jazz rhythms, the cabaret idiom, and classical structure, all integrated into his own melodic and orchestrational style. This music clearly reached the audience of his time, and as the success of the most recent Weill productions seems to indicate, it reaches us still.

At the same time, critics are taking another look at categorization, and many are finally agreeing that works like *Porgy and Bess*, *West Side Story*, *Sweeney Todd*, and the Weill operas represent a legitimate

adaptation of the operatic aesthetic to the needs of our time and should not be treated as a kind of popular subspecies. As much as anything else, the current widespread reexamination of Weill has been prompted by a withering away of an elitism that has persisted for too long.

"It's important for new material to enter the repertoire," says *Silverlake* director Harold Prince, "and as far as opera goes, that material can be found in the best of American musical theater. The problem in the past has been that people have had trouble identifying what will legitimately function in an opera house. But as I see it, if you can do Offenbach, there's no reason not to do Rodgers and Hammerstein, Bernstein, Sondheim, or Weill. The walls are finally coming down. As they damned well must."

## A Selected Guide to Weill on Disc

An excellent introduction to Weill's German-period music is *Kurt Weill*, a three-record set (DG 2709 064) featuring a cast of British singers and the London Sinfonietta, conducted by David Atherton. Included are the *Mahagonny Songspiel*, *Kleine Dreigroschenmusik* (an instrumental suite from *The Threepenny Opera*), *Vom Tod im*

*Walde*, *Das Berliner Requiem*, *Happy End*, the Violin Concerto, and the Pantomime from *Der Protagonist*. The set includes an informative booklet containing a chronology, an interview with Lenya, and notes by David Drew. The *Threepenny Opera* to get is the one on Odyssey (Y2 32977), with Lenya as Jenny. *Mahagonny* is a must, and in this case Lenya's is the only available complete recording (CBS K3L 243). Other Lenya recordings to look into are *Happy End* (CBS Special Products COS 2032), and *The Seven Deadly Sins* (CBS Special Products AKL 5175), although a newer and brighter-sounding recording of the latter, featuring Gisela May, has been available (DG 139 308) for some years.

Weill's two symphonies are available in a pair of readings, the superior of which is the Edo de Waart/Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra version (Philips 6500 642).

Of Weill's American scores, only *Street Scene* (CBS Special Products COS 4139) and *Lady in the Dark* (CBS Special Products COS 2390) can be had. Teresa Stratas' much-awaited disc of unknown Weill songs, also a digital recording, will be released this fall (Nonesuch D-79019).

## Aesthetic Value in Indeterminate Music

by Terence J. O'Grady  
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In the score of John Cage's composition "33", each of the roman numerals I, II, and III represents one movement. Each movement is marked "tacet" and is given a suggested timing in minutes and seconds which totals four minutes and thirty-three seconds for all three. Elsewhere in the score, it is revealed that the composition may be performed on any instrument for any length of time. In the first public performance by David Tudor in 1952, he seated himself at the piano and silently raised and lowered the lid of the keyboard for each of the three sections. This theatrical gesture was not required by the score but was presumably made to mark off the time in some demonstrable manner and to make the audience aware that it was in fact experiencing the piece.

The results of this performance, in terms of audible sound events, were probably restricted to the sound of nervous coughing and vague murmuring which are virtually omnipresent in any musical performance before a large audience but which are, on the whole, filtered out of the "aesthetic experi-

ence." In subsequent performances, one can imagine that, whoever the performer, the audience reaction and therefore the audible sound events which it produces (along with the "natural" sounds of the building's heating/cooling system, etc.), might well have been different. An audience prepared for the piece might have declined to submit gracefully to the experience and have openly voiced its opinion as to the value of the experience. Any performance taking place today, more than twenty-five years after the first, would probably experience difficulties which would mar the "usefulness" of the piece for the purposes of Cage's devotees. Unless a truly innocent audience had somehow been procured, the work might even evoke a highly self-conscious and contrived reaction by the audience, either through elaborate counter-compositions or through a carefully enforced, museumlike silence in homage to its position as a classic. Neither of these hypothetical responses would seem to be conducive to a satisfactory performance of the piece according to its original concept.

Cage's original idea is so well known, at least in general terms, that only the briefest explanation is offered here.

"When a composer feels a responsibility to make, rather than accept, he eliminates from the area of possibility all those events that do not suggest this at that point in time vogue for profundity. For he takes himself seriously, wishes to be considered great, and he thereby diminishes his love and increases his fear and concern about what people will think. There are many serious problems confronting such an individual. He must do it better, more impressively, more beautifully,

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etc., than anyone else. And what, precisely, does this, this beautiful profound object, this masterpiece, have to do with Life? It has this to do with life: that it is separate from it."<sup>1</sup>

Cage is here launching two attacks against the art-music tradition: first, by asserting that all allegiance to musical trends and fashions artificially restricts the expressive vocabulary of the composer to what is timely; and second, that works of art created under this system are, by definition, artificial and irrelevant to life as it is commonly experienced.

"For living takes place each instant and that instant is always changing. The wisest thing to do is to open one's ears immediately and hear a sound suddenly before one's thinking has a chance to turn into something logical, abstract, or symbolical."<sup>2</sup>

Cage and his followers obviously treasure the uniqueness of the moment, a concept presumably influenced by his interest in Zen philosophy and the *I Ching*, the ancient Chinese Book of Changes which Cage used to generate random processes for several of his compositions. This randomness no doubt guarantees that each moment in the composition will be unsullied by the intrusion of the composer's ego or the perceiver's intellect. It exists as an unplanned, unpredictable instance and gains its significance specifically from these factors.

It is not difficult to be sympathetic to Cage's philosophy in many respects since its roots are far from obscure. Although its debt to Oriental thought is clear, it is equally clear that Cage represents an aesthetic reaction to two more conventional but highly significant factors in contemporary Western music: the seeming exhaustion of traditional musical possibilities and the absolute deter-

minism of the integral serialists which emerged with Cage in the early 1950s. Cage's early experiments with complex rhythmic organization show that his philosophy is not simply a reaction against the absolute control over materials espoused by the followers of Webern. Nevertheless, it remains true that he becomes more dogmatic in his insistence on freedom from control, just as the integral serialists become more insistent on the virtues of total composer, or computer, or process dominance over sound events.

Furthermore, the suggestion that the sort of Western art music which results from the assertion of the composer's ego has nothing to do with life is certainly not unique with Cage. Any number of conservative critics and commentators have asserted a similar notion, that is, that contemporary art in general is cut off from life. They generally mean that the traditional audience of "music lovers" is not much interested in a great deal of contemporary music. Cage's view, of course, would seem to be much more sophisticated than this, and yet both views suggest that the music is not valid because it is not relevant.

Of the earlier "experimental" composers Charles Ives, Cage says, "... much of Ives is no longer experimental or necessary for us ... his meters and rhythms are no longer any more important for us than curiosities of the past like the patterns one finds in Stravinsky."<sup>3</sup> Here Cage is violating his own principle: he is refusing to accept Ives and others as relevant because they do not suggest his "at that point in time vogue for profundity." It would appear, then, that the question of relevance would not in itself ter-

to support Cage's position, which hardly differs from the position of the conservative critic who may simply have a low tolerance for high levels of dissonance. Cage's position suggests that Ives is passé because he no longer satisfies Cage's "vogue," just as surely as the conservative critic denies the validity of music he dislikes on the grounds that it is not in vogue, that is it does not (and probably cannot) appeal to those who have additionally supported art music. In *A Year from Monday*, Cage somewhat modifies his position in regard to Ives but continues to explore his use of "referential material" (i.e., quotations) because it is nationalistic in nature and not "global."<sup>4</sup> This position, derived mostly from Marshall McLuhan, is again very much tied to a particular vogue or profundity. Cage is as susceptible to this sort of judgment as any composer or critic. This does not necessarily damage his credibility as a composer, but it does call into question the significance of the entire issue. Cage is as guilty of this kind of posturing as anyone else, then the position itself can hardly be used as the basis for any moral or aesthetic argument in favor of or against any style of music.

Furthermore, Cage's related assertion that indeterminate music is significant because it demonstrates that Art and Life are not separate is equally meaningless in terms of its purely musical value. This premise is not universally accepted, however.

"Indeterminacy is not a game or a passing fancy. It is *the* philosophical challenge to the aesthetics, art, and ego of history. Its antagonists are numerous . . . However, what most antagonists (and some protagonists) fail to realize is that what must be dealt with is

the *concept* of indeterminacy, *not* the sounds, *not* the forms, *not* the individuals involved. If it cannot be reckoned with in philosophical terms, then it will destroy (or possibly already has destroyed) the structure, terms, and aesthetics of music and art as contemporary Western civilization has come to know them."<sup>5</sup>

Impressive as this may sound, it is simply not true. If there is any obligation at all, it is an obligation to reckon with indeterminate music in *musical* terms. We are not obliged to accept that aesthetic, or any other, as *carte blanche*. Nor should we be eager to reject the same aesthetic, or the music it produces, before we experience and attempt to analyze and evaluate that music. There is no reason, historical or otherwise, to suspend the evaluative capabilities which, presumably, the musical audience has always exercised. Similarly, there is no reason to restrict artificially any dialogue to the sort of vague and uninteresting cosmological platitudes which must result from a discussion of any such general and ill-defined "philosophy" without first examining the fruits of the philosophy in as much detail as possible. At any rate, the question of value in indeterminate music does not ultimately turn on an investigation of Cage's views as to the place of music in the world, despite his undisputed influence and usefulness as a starting point. In order fully to investigate indeterminate music, it may be helpful to differentiate between the various categories traditionally associated with it.

Although many such differentiations have been made, one of the most useful for the purposes of this essay involves distinctions between the degrees of a composer's control



over his materials. The term "improvisation" is most often used to suggest a degree of performer freedom within more or less agreed-upon conventions. While Roger Reynolds suggests that "indeterminacy" involves the lack of "preferred solutions," and "chance" the practice of following virtually no rules,<sup>6</sup> no real consensus exists in regard to these latter terms. For example, chance elements are often referred to as existing in a predetermined structure and playing a carefully predetermined role within that structure (as, for example, in many of Stockhausen's works), and this use would seem to be in at least partial opposition to Reynolds' description. So, while it may be useful to distinguish between compositions according to the degree of composer control which they demonstrate, they must be evaluated individually, since broadly labeled categories are not always helpful.

A second useful distinction involves works which are indeterminate (in whole or in part) in respect to composition and those which are indeterminate in respect to performance. If a work is indeterminate in respect to composition only (e.g., many of Cage's compositions based on systems derived from the *I Ching*), it may be repeated any number of times with no more deviation in performance than would reasonably be expected with a contemporary piece. Ramona Cormier suggests that exposure to this sort of work "yields an experience in which the perceiver expects to discern and anticipate order from one confrontation to the next.

... Also, the perceiver may when experiencing the former incorrectly assume, because of the discernible order, that the order was intended while his experience of the

latter a work indeterminate in respect to performance which cannot be repeated may convey the impression, and rightly so, that the work's order and elements were arbitrarily selected and arranged even though the arbitrariness was intended by the creator."<sup>7</sup>

This statement raises an important issue. It is likely that a perceiver's response to a given work will be affected, perhaps unduly, by knowledge of its indeterminacy. In regard to works indeterminate in respect to performance, Cormier states that the "momentariness" of this type "invalidates expectations built upon one's previous experience of it or other works in the same style."<sup>8</sup> It is relevant to ask at this point whether the discovery of "discernible order" necessarily involves repetition. While the repetition of works indeterminate in respect to composition may provide the listener with multiple opportunities to penetrate the complexities of a work, it cannot generate perceivable order where it does not exist. Conversely, a work indeterminate with respect to performance, although clearly "momentary" and probably not repeatable in specific detail, is not necessarily lacking in discernible order nor does it necessarily invalidate expectations built upon previous experience. Discernible order is clearly not a function of determinacy, and previous experience, insofar as it enables the listener to become sensitive to discernible order at all, is not invalidated by music indeterminate in respect to performance. Specific expectations may not come into play here, but previous experience in discerning order is relevant to the perception of any music, indeterminate or otherwise.

The question of what sort of discernible order is likely to occur in indeterminate m-



of various types and degrees is therefore of paramount importance. In the case of improvisation which allows for performer freedom within agreed-upon conventions, it seems clear that more or less traditional principles of organization remain operable. Performers generally will attempt to exploit such factors as balance, contrast, repetition, development, etc., in such a way that the listener will be able to perceive the logic in terms of expectations and deviations. Although group improvisation results in a structuring by many minds rather than by one mind, it will remain the sort of structuring which the listener may measure against his own "ideal" structuring, just as compositional choices result in structures which are measured against the listener's expectations. While improvisation tends to shift the responsibility of supplying coherent structure from the composer to the performer, it generally does not eliminate that responsibility. Improvisation, then, must be seen as a means to an end, whereas the more unpredictable varieties of indeterminate organization are seen more as a process which is an end in itself. Some of the most distinctive musical characteristics of improvisation are cited by Lukas Foss. He suggests that at a certain degree of freedom, particularly rhythmic freedom, can only be achieved by allowing improvisation to break down the rigidity of notated music: "One can develop it to a veritable polyphony of musics, with each music independent of the tempo and pulse of the other."<sup>9</sup> Foss cites Ives as a pioneer in this area,<sup>10</sup> and a more recent and somewhat subtler example can be seen in Stockhausen's *Zeitmasse* for five woodwinds where tempos and durations are fre-

quently determined by the capacities of the individual performer.

David Behrman also suggests that notation is often inadequate to evoke a desired musical effect: "It becomes apparent that the range of sound which a player is capable of covering is so extreme and so susceptible to nuance that no notation can hope to control the whole of it, especially not at once."<sup>11</sup> Furthermore, attempts at using overly complex notation will sometimes have a negative effect, as can be seen in this description of Morton Feldman's *Duration I*:

"... Constraining the player with too many or overly binding rules might change his mood, the spirit in which he makes his sounds, and the sounds themselves. Feldman's notations and rules suggest as unobtrusively as possible to the player that he provide a kind of sound which it will be pleasurable to hear mingling freely with those of other players, as he moves from one sound to another at a speed and rhythm of his own choosing."<sup>12</sup>

If, then, improvisation may be seen as a liberating factor (if only in a rhythmic context, as in the above two examples) within an otherwise conventional framework, it is likely that those pieces which feature it can still be perceived in relatively traditional terms, for example, contrast and development, expectation and deviation, etc. . . . Of *Duration I*, Behrman states: "Since the sounds are not playing the role of structural building blocks, the fact that they are being made by certain instruments at a certain dynamic level and are heard together is all that matters." And further: "Calling this 'chance composition' would be like saying that the flavor of bouillabaisse has been left to

chance because its chef forgot to fix the order in which its ingredients are eaten.”<sup>13</sup>

Whether improvisation or chance, this seems to be somewhat of an exaggeration. To suggest that the ways in which pitches combine is not relevant to the essence of the piece is simply not realistic, given the importance that the Western listener has always attached to vertical combinations, that is, harmony. Still, there will be “family resemblances” between performances, and the kinds of dissonances and consonances, as well as the melodic continuity of the individual parts, will remain stable. More importantly, the composer has provided for an alternation between dissonance and consonance (or lesser dissonance) as well as a varied yet clearly cohesive set of melodic lines, although the details of both are left to the performer’s discretion. Although this work clearly employs indeterminate elements, it nevertheless exhibits the sort of continuity which may be measured according to the traditional conventions of music logic.

It remains to be seen whether music of a more completely indeterminate nature can also be made sense of or evaluated in more or less traditional terms. It should first be pointed out that even music with a relatively high degree of built-in indeterminacy may, in performance, not be faithful to the indeterminate concept. In a discussion of Stockhausen’s *Klavierstück XI*, a work consisting of nineteen scattered fragments whose order the performer randomly chooses, Leonard Stein suggests that “. . . the performer . . . after sufficient practice will probably not play ‘at random’ anyway, as the composer urges him to do.”<sup>14</sup> Referring again to Feldman’s *Duration I*,

Behrman implies that supposed freedoms of choice may not, in reality, allow for so much freedom after all.

“But in practice there are limits concerning the speed appropriate to the notation, and an interpretation exceeding them would be a poor one. The unwritten rules describing such limits may in fact be imposed in rehearsal by the composer, the conductor, or by the players familiar with the composer’s work. . . .”<sup>15</sup>

Thus it appears that even works with a relatively high degree of conceptual indeterminacy may, in performance, demonstrate aspects of organization which are, in fact, completely controlled.

But, this is not always the case. Frequently, works remain as indeterminate in their performance as in their compositional concept and must be dealt with. It might be tempting to suggest that the degree of preceivable musical logic or potential for such logic is relative to the amount of conscious control exercised by the performer or composer. That this hypothesis is not valid can be seen from a cursory examination of five works of varying degrees of indeterminacy and composer or performer control.

Behrman’s description of Christian Wolff’s *Duo for Pianists II* reveals a work which, while seemingly indeterminate to great extent, demonstrates a relatively predictable result, in at least certain aspects of performance.

“1. To begin, and every time a fragment has been completed: the first player to make the next sound determines which fragment is to come next by playing the first sound of that fragment. The other player hears the sound, recognizes the fragment that it be-



ns, and responds by playing his own part that fragment. Or, he may a) fail to recognize the cue, b) start another fragment himself simultaneously with the first player. In any case, the directions provide that as soon as the players realize that they are not playing the same fragment together, they could break off and 'start' over again. . . . Such breakdowns in coordination are a part of the piece and have musical characteristics, in performance, of their own—rhythms and pitch structures, for instance, which give a quality different from the rest of the music."<sup>16</sup>

Concerning another aspect of Wolff's notation, Behrman states that several devices result in a certain kind of performance tension which is itself conducive to specific mannerisms: "The attack will have a rushed, nervous, cramped quality that could not have been notated in any other way. It is this quality that the composer is concerned with, rather than with the sounds' other measurements."<sup>17</sup>

And further: "Wolff's notation approaches the role of rule governing the conduct of games. It tends to produce characteristic sound combinations, recognizable as the composer's 'signatures,' just as a game has its characteristic 'moves'. (Among them the grace notes jumping back and forth among players, the sudden cut-off of a long sound just after another begins, the thin sustaining sound made by a player who is waiting for his cue and is not sure whether he may have missed it.)"<sup>18</sup>

Although neither pitch content nor rhythm is predetermined in *Duo for Pianists II*, it obviously displays some rather specific characteristics which would tend to assure conti-

nuity within the piece as well as between different performances of the piece.

Behrman suggests that a further by-product of the compositional concept as expressed in the notation is an increased mutual sensitivity on the performers' part: "In Wolff's notation, the players must listen with such care to one another that an inaccuracy is liable to alter the signal received by one's partner and so disturb the continuity."<sup>19</sup> Significantly, there is a continuity to disturb here, just as there are audible signposts which give the work a specific character. While the work is indeterminate to a great extent, it offers to the listener evidence of a logical structure and the possibility of being perceived and evaluated according to more or less traditional criteria, for example, the use of contrast, repetition, deviation, and balance.

Terry Riley's *In C* (1964) represents another type of "chance" piece. Against the background of a constantly pulsating high "C," the members of an ensemble proceed through a series of fifty-three musical figures of various length, all expressing the tonic, dominant, or dominant of the dominant in C major. Michael Nyman explains the performance procedure.

"After the pulse has been established each performer determines for himself when to enter, how many times to repeat each figure and how to align the figure with other parts. Although, as with Riley's other pieces, the progression through the written material is nominally free, each player is responsible for the overall ensemble sound of which he is a part.

" . . . Riley places stress on the musicianship of each individual, so that his part can be related to by the other players and he,



in turn, 'can make a meaningful relationship to them'. Similarly, the rate of progress must be regulated—performers should not wander too far ahead or lag behind the ensemble. Thus, the overall rate through the figures is controlled, even though the individual rate is quite free.'<sup>20</sup>

As to its musical results, Nyman states: "... The same figure heard against itself on different pulses; one player on one figure, another on another, still others on a third (with a number of individual variations between each combination of figures)—creates a complex, highly varied pulsating 'vibration,' changing from moment to moment, as each player stays or moves on in his own time."<sup>21</sup>

These musical ideas also result in various patterns of consonance and dissonance which may differ from those associated with more traditional styles but which do parallel them. And, although this work does in fact "modulate" over a period of time (mostly because of the addition of an F# and its subsequent deletion), the interest of the work lies more in the subtle fluctuation between tension and relaxation, a fluctuation that can be perceived and understood in accordance with traditional expectations.

Steve Reich's *Pendulum Music* (1968) presents a different type of problem. It is written for microphones, amplifiers, speakers, and performers. The score reads as follows.

"Pendulum Music: For Microphones, Amplifiers, Speakers, and Performers. Two, three, four, or more microphones are suspended from the ceiling by their cables so that they all hang the same distance from the floor and are all free to swing with a pendu-

lar motion. Each microphone's cable is plugged into an amplifier which is connected to a speaker. Each microphone hangs a few inches directly above or next to its [sic] speaker."

The performance begins with each performer taking a microphone, pulling it back like a swing; then in unison they release all of the microphones together. They now carefully turn up each amplifier just to the point where feedback occurs when a mike swings directly over or next to its speaker. Thus, a series of feedback pulses is heard which will either be all in unison or not depending on the gradually changing phase relations of the different microphone pendulums. The performers then sit down to watch and listen to the process along with the audience. The piece is ended sometime after all the microphones have come to rest and are feeding back a continuous tone as the performers pull out the power cords of the amplifiers.

Although this is a chance piece, the elements of chance are actually limited to a great extent. Multiple performances of the piece will tend to resemble one another greatly, especially if the same or similar equipment is used. The variables, for example, the trajectory, speed, and "pitch" of the swinging microphones and the types of speakers, are not likely to produce results of any startling variance. The piece, which (like Riley's) has to do with the juxtaposition of different phases of a purposely restricted idea, is in some respects the most "controlled" of any discussed so far. Yet, it is unlikely that the application of traditional musical logic or expectations will make much out of such a piece simply because the possibilities inherent in the piece are not su-

ciently rich to generate extended musical interest.

John Cage and Lejaren Hiller's multimedia work *HPSCHD* (1967) combines from one to fifty-one computer-formulated electronic sound tapes and from one to seven solo compositions for harpsichord. The piece has been recorded by Nonesuch Records and, in this version, only three solos are included: Solo I is, according to Peter Yates's liner notes, "computer-written in 12-tone temperament on the same formulae which are used for the fifty-one sound tapes"; Solo II consists of twenty repetitions of Mozart's *Dice Game* (K. Anh. C 30.01) in which each measure of four eighth-measure sections is determined by a throw of dice (although the choices for each measure exhibit the same harmonic implications); Solo VI begins with the dice game and proceeds to "associated and dissociated bass and treble measures from keyboard works by Beethoven, Chopin, Schumann, Gottschalk, Busoni, Schoenberg, Cage, and Hiller."<sup>23</sup> Yates states that "all 'chance' factors occur within limits closely or widely permitted by the makers."<sup>24</sup> Certainly much of what is heard on the recording is controlled by the composers. Solo VII, not heard on the recording, consists of randomly chosen (by the performer) examples from the works of Mozart, and its exclusion eliminates one of the most significant possibilities for introducing chance elements into the performance. Still, indeterminate elements do occur in the computer-derived randomness of the tapes, the appropriation of a numerical system from the *I Ching*, and in the Knobs computer printout which suggests to the listener ways in which he may alter the compo-

sition by manipulating the balance between stereo channels and the bass and treble controls.

*HPSCHD* clearly contains the sort of contrasting and complementary elements which would seem to be conducive to traditional processes of perception and evaluation. Yates refers to the intermixing of "computer-formalized programs" for "note sequence, time (in units), successive events, melodic 'goals' (without cadence) and types (diatonic, chromatic, chordal arpeggiation), volume, and dynamics . . . ." He also states that "the patterns are overlaid and continually change, the more redundant being more clearly differentiated, the effect rather like individual trees merging into a forest."<sup>25</sup> However, in the Nonesuch version both tracks are so dense that it is difficult to discern either repetition or contrast in any meaningful way, regardless of the listener's attempts at knob-twisting. The problem here is not a dearth of potentially interesting musical material but rather a superfluity of material by which musical coherence is lost or at least difficult to discover.

The last work to be considered in this discussion is Cage's *Cartridge Music* (1960). The piece is described by Nyman.

"The score of *Cartridge Music* consists of transparent sheets on which are printed different shapes; the sheets are overlaid and readings taken that are 'useful' in performance since they 'enable one to go about the business of making sounds'. These readings indicate to the players when to activate, 'generally by percussion or fricative means,' objects, such as toothpicks, matches, slinkies, piano wires, feathers that have been put into a gramophone cartridge in the place



of the needle, or the objects—chairs, tables, wastepaper baskets . . . which are amplified by means of contact mikes; or when to change the dial position on the amplifier; or when to remove an object from a cartridge and insert another; or perform loops—repeated actions, periodic in rhythm.”<sup>26</sup>

It is clear from a glance at the score—an abstract pattern of curved lines, shapes, and dots which bears little resemblance to conventional musical notation or even the more typical forms of graph notation—that this work is extremely indeterminate in respect to performance. And yet, in performance, it tends to produce satisfying results, even in the conventional terms of variation, contrast, etc., simply because the performers are free to react to each other in ways which demonstrate musical logic, even if improvised musical logic, and most performers will exploit this opportunity, regardless of Cage’s intentions.

The purpose of this brief discussion of five compositions which may be considered indeterminate to various degrees and in various ways is to suggest that the potential “value” (in traditional terms) of a particular piece (however difficult that may be to determine) is not necessarily related to its level of indeterminacy. It is certainly true that all works exhibiting indeterminacy are not equal in their ability to provide material for aesthetic contemplation in the traditional sense, but their inequality stems not from the degree of composer or performer control, but from the potential of the aural “product” which they produce. Cage and Hiller’s *HPSCHD* was shown to be an extremely indeterminate work clearly based on the conscious compositional choices of the compos-

ers. And yet, despite this control, the work is less than successful in traditional terms simply because it represents an overload of complexity. The fifty-one sound tapes combine with the three solo parts to generate a texture which is so complex and intricate that it is bound to be muddled and confused even on repeated hearings. Even the suggested program which allows the listener to manipulate the balance between channels and treble-bass controls appears to be little more than tokenism designed to generate an increased level of indeterminacy that can hardly be noticed. Even if one channel is eliminated completely, the remaining channel still constitutes an overload that is not really conducive to the fine discriminations between various elements of the composition which have always characterized the appreciation of art music.

On the other end of the scale lies Reich’s *Pendulum Music*, a piece which appears to be relatively indeterminate in performance but which, in fact, tends to be all too predictable in practice. More significantly, the musical results of *Pendulum Music* provide scant potential for aesthetic interest. This is a case of complexity “underload.” The piece simply does not allow for sufficient variety or richness of musical effect to assure sustained interest. To be sure, the novelty of sound material in works such as this helps to generate the listener’s interest initially, but a piece like *Pendulum Music* is intrinsically too simple and will soon be exhausted regardless of how different various performances might be.

In contrast to this, the pieces by Feldman (*Duration I*) and Wolff (*Duo for Pianists*) can be seen as providing the sort of subtil-



lay of ideas, forces, and tensions which would repay careful and repeated scrutiny, even though different performances would vary in some respects. Even Cage's *Cartridge Music*, although clearly indeterminate, provides for the possibility of a sensitive, although improvised, structured continuity partly because of its lack of specific instructions but also because of its potential variety of textures and sound effects. The sort of structured continuity which results from *Cartridge Music*, although differing from performance to performance, might well approach that associated with electronic music compositions in which contrasts between blocks of sound rather than pitch content are emphasized. The work provides enough timbral variety to avoid monotony, while tacitly encouraging the performers to establish their own continuity.

Needless to say, such considerations (or any attempt at subjective evaluation) would on all probability be considered meaningless by Cage and his disciples. To a composer for whom all sounds are equally valid, any attempt to evaluate the ordering of those sounds must be irrelevant or even damaging. For such attempts amount to a "focus," and, as Nyman relates, "... Cage ... isaverse to all those actions that lead toward placing emphasis on the things that happen in the course of a process."<sup>27</sup>

Nevertheless, as suggested earlier, no listener is required to accept Cage's philosophy as a necessary precondition for accepting all part of his music. In fact, Cage himself has commented that one of the virtues of indeterminate music is that it allows—even requires—the listener to "arrange" his own music.<sup>28</sup> Surely, this would include listening

for those elements in the music which seem to make most sense to the listener. It would seem perfectly logical, in view of this, that the next step for the listener would be to seek out music which presents him with those elements. That Cage himself would never take that step need not overly disturb us. In one of Cage's anecdotes in *A Year from Monday*, he tells how he once came into his mother's room and found the television turned to a program which featured teenagers dancing to rock-and-roll: "I asked Mother how she liked the new music. She said, 'Oh I'm not fussy about music.' Then, brightening up, she went on, 'You're not fussy about music either.'"<sup>29</sup>

We, however, may choose to be fussy. While it is obvious that indeterminate music presents new problems to the listener, it is also clear that these problems are not necessarily best dealt with on a broad conceptual basis. It is possible (though admittedly difficult) to evaluate indeterminate music in specifically musical, not philosophical, terms. To be sure, such judgments will be partially subjective, as they always are for any art music. It is an aesthetic advantage of indeterminate music that it forces the listener to enlarge his capacity for judgment to include nontraditional means of expression and to become an active participant in the making of music. Nevertheless, the significant question must be: Does a piece, indeterminate or not, provide valid possibilities for aesthetic reflection?<sup>30</sup> This is a more important question than whether ego is involved—although the expression of human creativity is never a moot point—or whether a position is socially or philosophically viable according to some nonmusical premises. A critical per-

ception of music is necessary for its continued existence, and it is not unreasonable to expect from the new music what has always been required from the old.

### Notes

<sup>1</sup> "Juilliard Lecture," in *A Year from Monday* (Middletown, Conn., 1967), p. 105.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 98.

<sup>3</sup> "History of Experimental Music in the United States," in *Silence: Lectures and Writings* (Middletown, Conn., 1961; reprinted, Cambridge, Mass., 1966), p. 70.

<sup>4</sup> "Two Statements on Ives," p. 41.

<sup>5</sup> David H. Cope, *New Directions in Music*, 2nd ed. (Dubuque, Iowa, 1976), p. 169.

<sup>6</sup> "Indeterminacy: Some Considerations," *Perspectives of New Music*, IV/1 (Spring, 1965), 136.

<sup>7</sup> "Indeterminacy and Aesthetic Theory," *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* (JAAC), XXXIII (1975), 286.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>9</sup> "The Changing Composer-Performer Relationship: A Monologue and a Dialogue," in *Perspectives on Notation and Performance*, ed. Benjamin Boretz and Edward T. Cone (New York, 1976), p. 37.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>11</sup> David Behrman, "What Indeterminate Notation Determines," in *Perspectives on Notation and Performance*, p. 75.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 77.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 77-78.

<sup>14</sup> Leonard Stein, "The Performer's Point of View," in *Perspectives on Notation and Performance*, p. 49.

<sup>15</sup> Behrman, p. 77.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 83.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 85.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 89.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 89.

<sup>20</sup> *Experimental Music: Cage and Beyond* (New York, 1974), p. 126.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 127.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 11.

<sup>23</sup> Peter Yates, Liner Notes for *John Cage and Lejaren Hiller: HPSCHD for Harpsichords and Computer-Generated Sound Tapes* (Nonesuch Records #H-71221-Stereo, 1969).

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>26</sup> Nyman, *Experimental Music*, p. 76.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 22.

<sup>28</sup> John Cage, "Interview with Roger Reynolds," in *Contemporary Composers on Contemporary Music*, ed. Elliott Schwartz and Barney Childs (New York, 1967), p. 339.

<sup>29</sup> Cage, *A Year from Monday*, p. 111.

<sup>30</sup> In Herbert M. Schueller's "The Aesthetic Implications of Avant-Garde Music," in *JAAC*, XXXV (1977), 397-410, he suggests that the aesthetic views of Stephen Pepper may be relevant to the problem. In *The Basis of Criticism in the Arts* (Cambridge, Mass., 1945), Pepper states that, in the absence of more traditional conventions, we must evaluate a work on the basis of its "vividness" as an experience. While this is useful insofar as it presupposes that evaluation can be made without recourse to a conventional standard, it does not help us to determine the nature of the factors that create interest or vividness. If all response is purely emotive, then we are in no position to speak of evaluation at all. If, as it is more likely, the experiencing of vividness is bas

in some specific characteristic of a piece of music, it is only reasonable to expect that characteristic to reveal itself to introspection

and, ultimately, to be analyzed as to its complexity, quality, etc.



## Braille Music Forum: Dialogue on Twentieth-Century Notational Devices, Part II

By Bettye Krolick

The purpose of this two-article series on twentieth-century music notation is to give readers the opportunity to know in advance about ideas being considered by the Music Advisory Committee of the Braille Authority of North America (BANA), and to voice opinions and suggestions to the committee before it makes firm recommendations to BANA.

Creating braille notation for some twentieth-century music is challenging and important, and the meaning of the word "music" has changed to include sounds formerly considered nonmusical. Concomitantly, the concept of written notation has changed. Some contemporary composers use traditional notational symbols to express new sounds. Other composers, eager to break away from tradition in notation as well as in composition, invent new symbols for new sounds. All composers would seem to agree, however, that accurate and musical performance of their works are desirable; hence, performers, along with musicologists and other composers, need to know what the composer means.

A few examples of the variety of print notation will illustrate the dilemma of any committee considering braille notation for modern composition. The score to *Per Bastiana Tai-Yang Cheng*, a piece for full orchestra by Luigi Nono (Ricordi, 1967), is notated on graph paper. Every instrumental part consists of horizontal or vertical straight lines with dynamics below these lines and occasional arrows above or below. In *Credentials*, by Roman Haubenstock-Ramati (Universal Edition, 1963), for voice and eight players, the letters of the vocal text are printed in different thicknesses and heights. A single word may have some letters two inches high and other letters 1/4-inch tall as part of the composer's indication of how the syllables are to be sung, spoken, shouted, or chanted. Other notational devices, none of which resemble standard musical notation, indicate laughing, weeping, clicking the tongue, hissing, and audible inhaling or exhaling. The score for *Music Walk for Heinz Klaus Metzger* by John Cage (Henmar Press, 1960) consists of ten parts and two graphs. The music is to be played by one or more pianists who also play radio and produce auxiliary noises. During performance the ten parts are performed in any order, and each part is a page containing a few random dots, the dots being the only notation. The two graphs are small transparent sheets containing straight lines. They are to be placed over the dots, if desired, and can be used right side up or upside down. Fortunately, all of these scores contain extensive notes about the performance techniques to be used. But *Four Visions, No. 2* by Robert Moran (Universal Edition, 1964), for flute, harp, and string quartet contains very little explanation. This score, notated for six instruments, consists of a single abstract picture for each of its four movements. Scores like this resemble nonrepresentational or even pop art instead of what we have come to think of as a score.

The first task of the advisory committee is to determine which print notational devices are

ed enough to justify being adapted to the braille medium. The initial group of print symbols being considered comes from *Music Notation*, 2nd edition, by Gardner Read (Crescendo Publishing Co., 1969). They are published notational devices considered important in 1969 that are still in use twelve years later. In the first article of this dialogue, suggestions were made for the notation of note shapes, duration, and tone clusters. Additional suggestions follow.

## eter and Time

piece of music is measured by temporal units called beats. Their pattern is called meter and is traditionally been indicated by a time signature: two numbers, one written above the other. 2/4 meter, for example, the basic value is a quarter note and every second quarter note receives an accent. The 2 is written above the 4 on a staff.

In some recently composed music, the top half of the signature has two or more numbers connected with plus signs. It is proposed that the braille plus sign (dots 3-4-6) be inserted between the numbers, unspaced, as in print, and that the signature end with the lower numeral as an ordinary meter signature. The signature in Example 1 is 2 plus 2 plus 3 over 8.

ample 1.

Some contemporary music is written with a time signature, or the time may be specified in seconds. Often a piece will alternate between time signatures and indications of real time. In this article, it is proposed that the phrase "time notation" be placed in parentheses and inserted where the change from metered pulse takes place. A return to meter would be indicated with a conventional time signature.

## Approximate Pitch

some twentieth-century music the staff contains stem signs, dots, wavy lines, diagonal lines, and other markings giving an approximate indication of pitch. Although the composer does not wish to specify notes, these symbols provide guidance for the general pitch range, and the rising, falling, and/or undulations of the melodic or harmonic structure. In this case, braille notes can be written provided they are preceded and followed by a sign to inform the reader that the pitch is only approximate. It is proposed that such a passage be preceded by dots 6, 2, 1 and followed by dots 4, 5, 3 in order to set the passage apart from surrounding notes. In Example 1 the first and last notes appear in print. Those in between are approximations represented in braille by stem signs with no note heads. This passage is in time notation.

Example 2. 

## petition

Another feature of contemporary music is aperiodic repetition indicated in print by wavy lines, s, or other devices that show the duration of the repetition rather than a specific number of repeated notes. It is proposed that aperiodic repetition of short rhythmic figures or single notes



be indicated in braille with a two-cell sign that is a combination of the grace note and repeat signs (dots 2-6, 2-3-5-6), along with an indication of duration. In Example 3, the four-note figure is followed by the two-cell repetition sign; the next signs, dots 3-6, 3-6, show that the repetition (a wavy line in print) extends beyond the next two seconds (short vertical lines in print). Dots 4-5 representing seconds and dots 3-6, 3-6, representing extended lines were discussed in Part I of this dialogue on twentieth-century notational practices. The print for the second part of Example 3 shows three notes tied with dotted rather than solid-line ties. Above the notes and ties is a series of horizontal dots. The composer wants the performer to repeat the pitch an indeterminate number of times during the period of time occupied by an eighth note followed by a half and another eighth. In this case the braille shows the pitch, third octave, followed by the two-cell repetition sign; the time values are found after an in-accord sign. (The note C with no octave sign is a standard braille method of indicating rhythm without indicating pitch.)

Example 3.



### Fermatas

The final two signs being considered by the committee at this time are generally classified as fermatas.\* The print symbol for a long fermata consists of a dot with half of a circle above it. The braille sign is dots 1-2-6, 1-2-3. Gardner Read identifies two additional fermatas. A medium pause is indicated by a dot with half a square around it rather than half a circle, and a short pause uses a tent shape above the dot. Example 4 shows the proposed signs for these fermatas.

⠠⠠⠠ Medium pause. Print resembles squared fermata.

Example 4.

⠠⠠⠠ Short pause. Print resembles tent-shaped fermata.

The next step in considering the value of the signs shown in these two articles is to get reactions from transcribers and readers. Experiment with these signs and contact any member of the Music Advisory Committee with your reactions: George Bennette (New York Association for the Blind); Tom Ridgeway (Georgia Academy for the Blind); Sandra Walberg (NLS); Ethel Schuman (transcriber from Woodland Hills, CA); and Bettye Kroliek, 602 Ventura Rd., Champaign, IL 61820.

\*In American and German usage "fermata" means "pause." Although "fermata" is an Italian word, that language uses *corona* (crown) to indicate a pause, a crown describing the traditional symbol for a pause: a dot with a curved line above it. See the *Harvard Dictionary of Music*, 2nd edition (Cambridge, 1969), p. 310.



# New Music Materials

The following works are available on loan from the Music Section, National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped, Library of Congress, Washington, DC 20542.

Braille and recorded materials may also be purchased from their respective producers. Large-print scores are available on loan only. These listings show, where possible, composer, title, print publisher, producer, and Music Section catalog number.

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## Sources

**C.** Handcopied braille; available only

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**BT.** Norges Blindeforbunds Trykkeri, Rosenkrantzgt. 3, 5000 Bergen, Norway

**NIB.** Royal National Institute for the Blind, 224 Great Portland Street, London, W1N 6AA, England

**IB.** Regione Toscana – Stamperia Musicale, Istituto Nazionale dei Ciechi "Vittorio Emanuele II," Via Aurelio Nicolodi n. 2, Postale n. 5/1257, Firenze 50131, Italy

**VB.** Verein zur Förderung der Menschenbildung e.V., 26 Bleekstrasse, Hannover-Kirchrode 3000, West Germany

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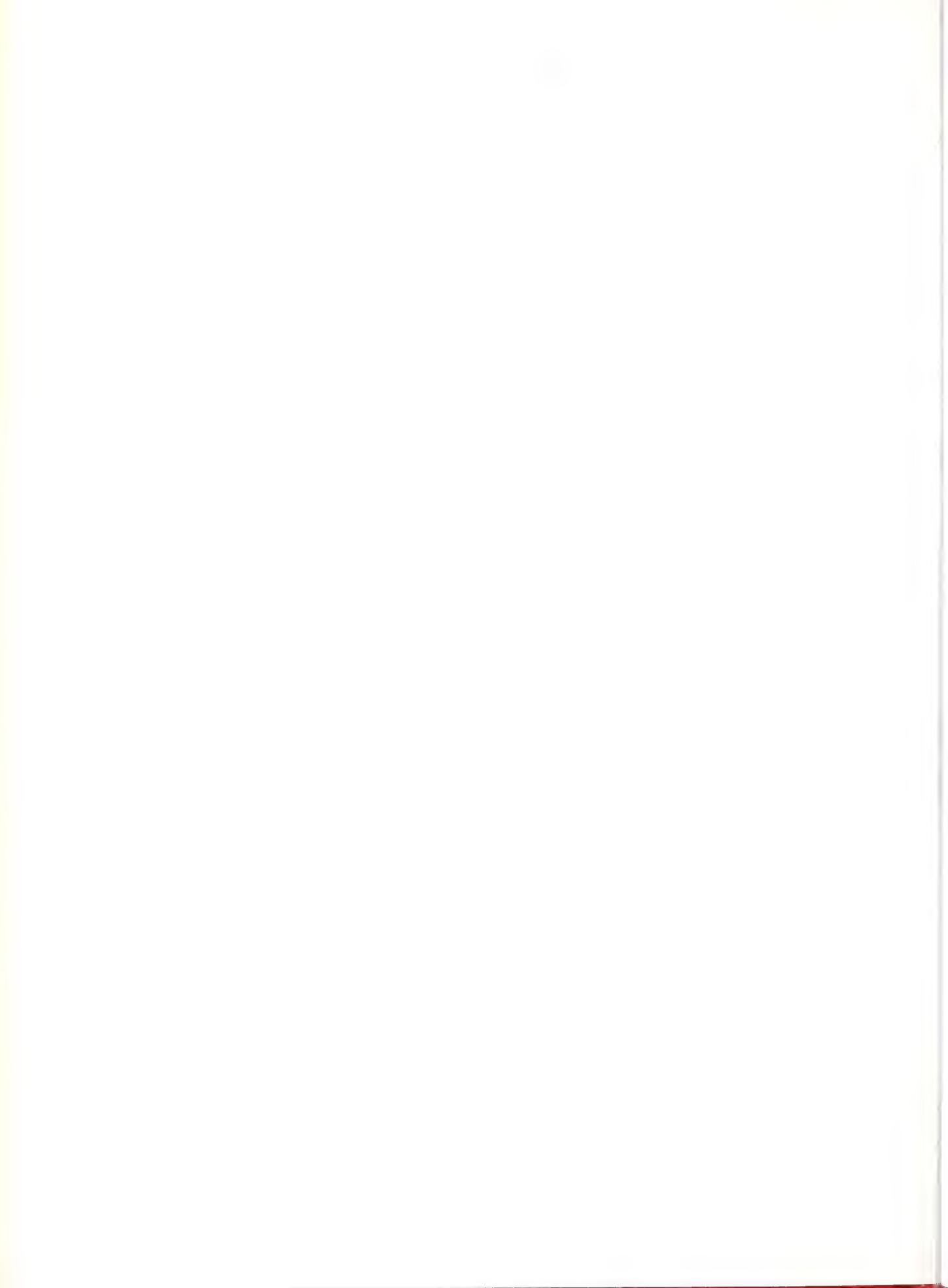
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